WEIRD ADVENTURES ON OTHER WORLDS—THE UNIVERSE OF THE FUTURE

PLANET COMICS

10¢

SEPT.
No. 20

FLINT BAKER
BATTLES THE NIGHTMARE MONSTERS OF SPACE'S FORBIDDEN ISLE IN
"WINGED MAN-EATERS OF THE EXILE STAR"

MARS—GOD OF WAR

REEF RYAN—EXPLORER

GALE ALLEN

AURO—LORD OF JUPITER

Sensational!

Up-to-the-minute NEW THE RANGERS COMICS!

Must Have!

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THE RANGERS SEE NO OTHER MAGAZINE ON THE NEWSSTANDS

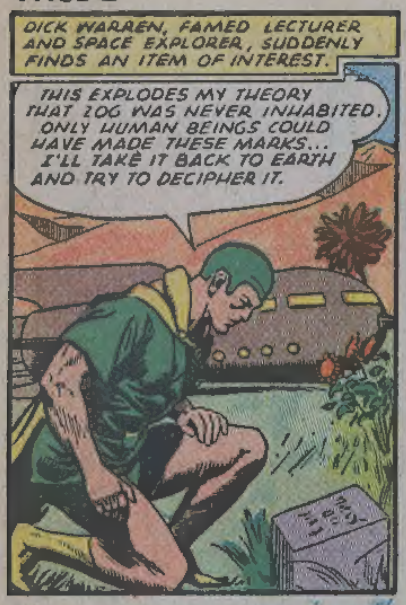
THE RANGERS

THE MOST GOOD BY FAR COMICS ON ALL NEWSSTANDS

MARS GOD OF WAR

BY ROSS GALLUN

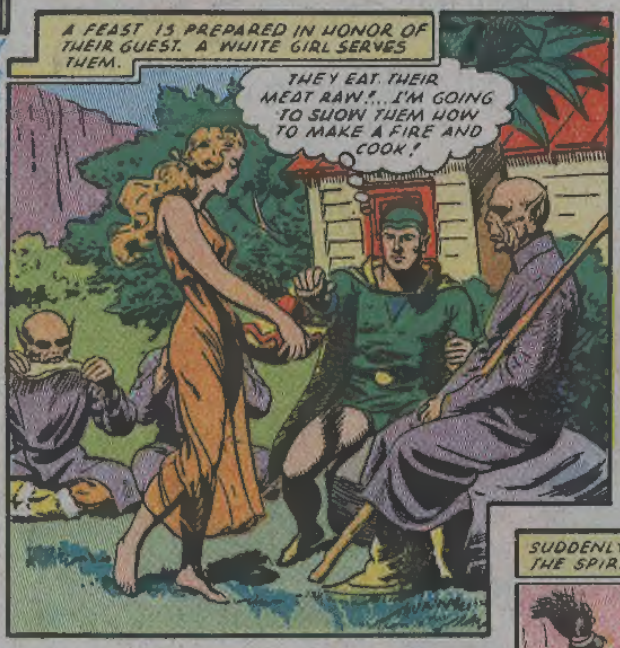
A HUGE SPACE-SHIP FROM EARTH APPROACHES THE PLANETOID ZOG.
WITH THE HORRIBLE WAR-CRY OF "KILL AND DESTROY" ON HIS BLOOD-FLECKED LIPS, MARS, GOD OF WAR, STRIDES ACROSS THE UNIVERSE IN HIS ETERNAL SEARCH FOR MORE VICTIMS TO SATISFY HIS LUST FOR CARNAGE

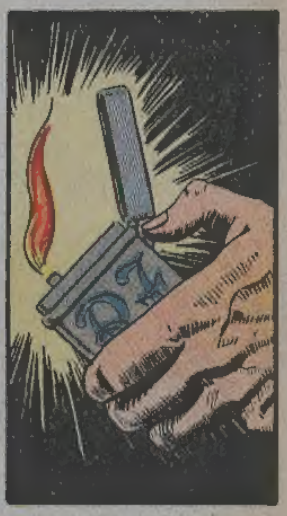

DICK WARREN, FAMED LECTURER AND SPACE EXPLORER, SUDDENLY FINDS AN ITEM OF INTEREST.
THIS EXPLODES MY THEORY THAT ZOG WAS NEVER INHABITED. ONLY HUMAN BEINGS COULD HAVE MADE THESE MARKS... I'LL TAKE IT BACK TO EARTH AND TRY TO DECIPHER IT.

AS DICK EXAMINES THE STONE, A SUDDEN HAIL GREETS HIM!
STRANGER!... STRANGER!... WE ARE FRIENDS!
THIS CERTAINLY IS INTERESTING... WHAT'S THAT!

WE SAW YOU LAND AND CAME TO INVESTIGATE!.. THAT STONE GIVES THE DISTANCE TO OUR VILLAGE. MY NAME IS WAD!.. I AM LEADER HERE!
I'M DICK WARREN FROM EARTH. I NEVER SUSPECTED THIS PLANETOID WAS INHABITED!

LATER, THEY TAKE HIM TO THE VILLAGE.
THIS IS OUR VILLAGE!.. YOU ARE WELCOME!
I WILL SPEND SEVERAL WEEKS HERE!

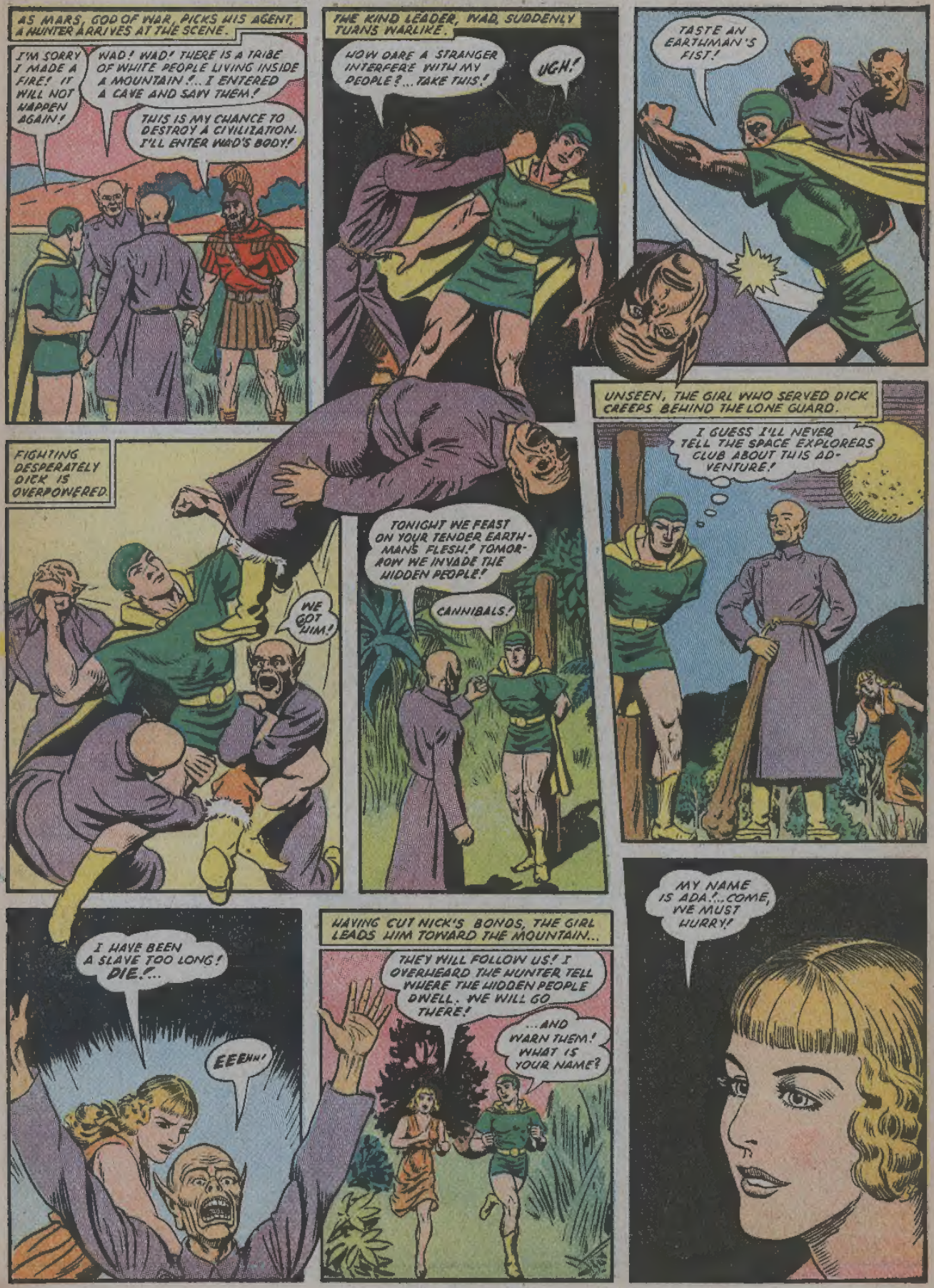

A FEAST IS PREPARED IN HONOR OF THEIR GUEST. A WHITE GIRL SERVES THEM.
THEY EAT THEIR MEAT RAW!.. I'M GOING TO SHOW THEM HOW TO MAKE A FIRE AND COOK!

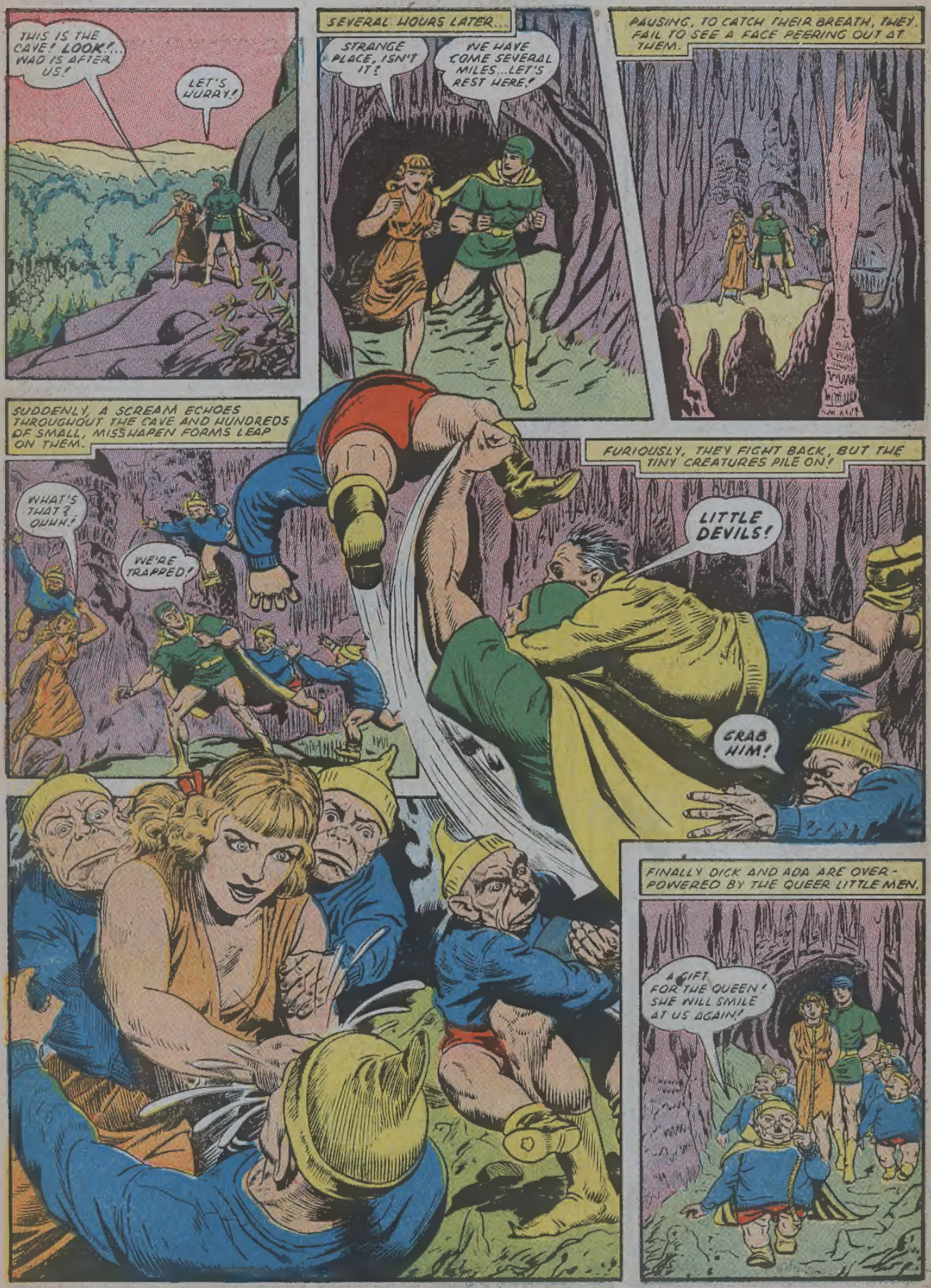


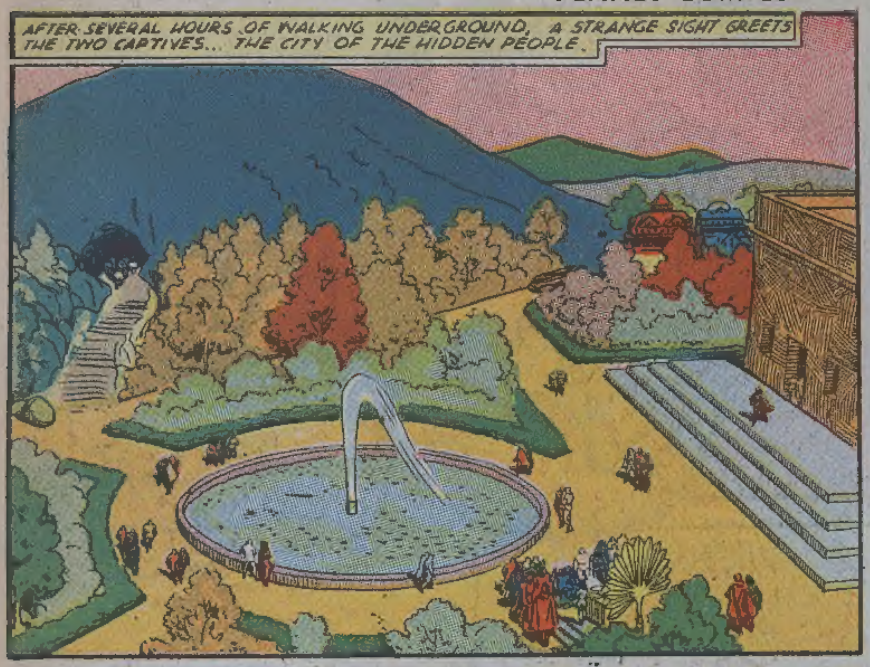
AS THE TINY FLAME FLICKERS...
PUT IT OUT!
EEH!
OHH!

WHAT'S THE MATTER?
THEY CANNOT STAND THE SMALLEST FLAME! IT DRAWS THE OXYGEN FROM THEIR BODIES AND STRANGLES THEM! I AM DIFFERENT!... WHY, I DON'T KNOW!

SUDDENLY, UNSEEN BY HUMAN EYES, THE SPIRIT OF MARS DESCENDS IN THEIR MIDST.


AS MARS, GOD OF WAR, PICKS HIS AGENT, A HUNTER ARRIVES AT THE SCENE.
I'M SORRY I MADE A FIRE! IT WILL NOT HAPPEN AGAIN!
WAD! WAD! THERE IS A TRIBE OF WHITE PEOPLE LIVING INSIDE A MOUNTAIN!... I ENTERED A CAVE AND SAW THEM!
THIS IS MY CHANCE TO DESTROY A CIVILIZATION. I'LL ENTER WAD'S BODY!
THE KIND LEADER, WAD, SUDDENLY TURNS WARLIKE.
HOW DARE A STRANGER INTERFERE WITH MY PEOPLE?... TAKE THIS!
UGH!
TASTE AN EARTHMAN'S FIST!
UNSEEN, THE GIRL WHO SERVED DICK CREEPS BEHIND THE LONE GUARD.
I GUESS I'LL NEVER TELL THE SPACE EXPLOREAS CLUB ABOUT THIS ADVENTURE!
FIGHTING DESPERATELY DICK IS OVERPOWERED.
WE GOT HIM!
TONIGHT WE FEAST ON YOUR TENDER EARTHMAN'S FLESH! TOMORROW WE INVADE THE HIDDEN PEOPLE!
CANNIBALS!
I HAVE BEEN A SLAVE TOO LONG! DIE!...
EEEHH!
HAVING CUT NICK'S BONDS, THE GIRL LEADS HIM TOWARD THE MOUNTAIN...
THEY WILL FOLLOW US! I OVERHEARD THE HUNTER TELL WHERE THE HIDDEN PEOPLE DWELL. WE WILL GO THERE!
...AND WARN THEM! WHAT IS YOUR NAME?
MY NAME IS ADA!...COME, WE MUST HURRY!

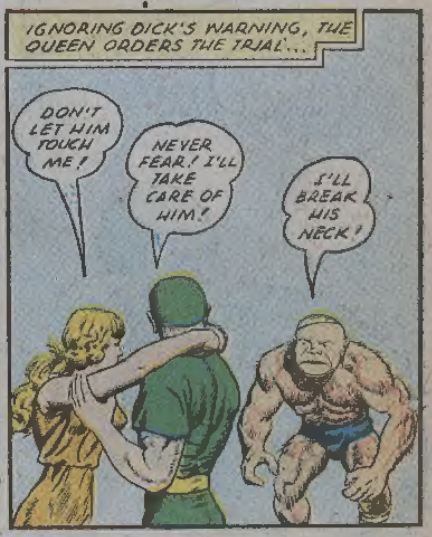

THIS IS THE CAVE! LOOK!... WAD IS AFTER US!
LET'S HURRY!
SEVERAL HOURS LATER...
STRANGE PLACE, ISN'T IT?
WE HAVE COME SEVERAL MILES...LET'S REST HERE!
PAUSING, TO CATCH THEIR BREATH, THEY, FAIL TO SEE A FACE PEERING OUT AT THEM.
SUDDENLY, A SCREAM ECHOES THROUGHOUT THE CAVE AND HUNDREDS OF SMALL, MISSHAPEN FORMS LEAP ON THEM.
WHAT'S THAT? OWW!
WE'RE TRAPPED!
FURIOUSLY, THEY FIGHT BACK, BUT THE TINY CREATURES PILE ON!
LITTLE DEVILS!
GRAB HIM!
FINALLY DICK AND ADA ARE OVER-POWERED BY THE QUEER LITTLE MEN.
A GIFT FOR THE QUEEN! SHE WILL SMILE AT US AGAIN!

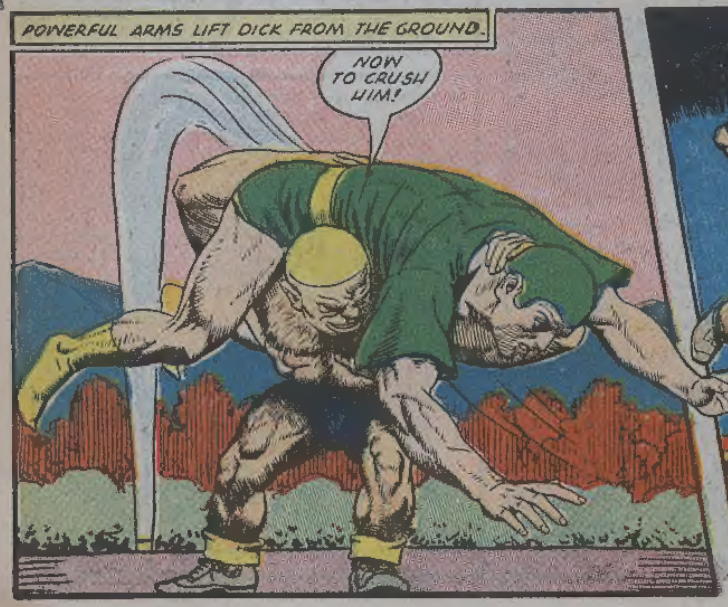

AFTER SEVERAL HOURS OF WALKING UNDERGROUND, A STRANGE SIGHT GREETS THE TWO CAPTIVES... THE CITY OF THE HIDDEN PEOPLE.

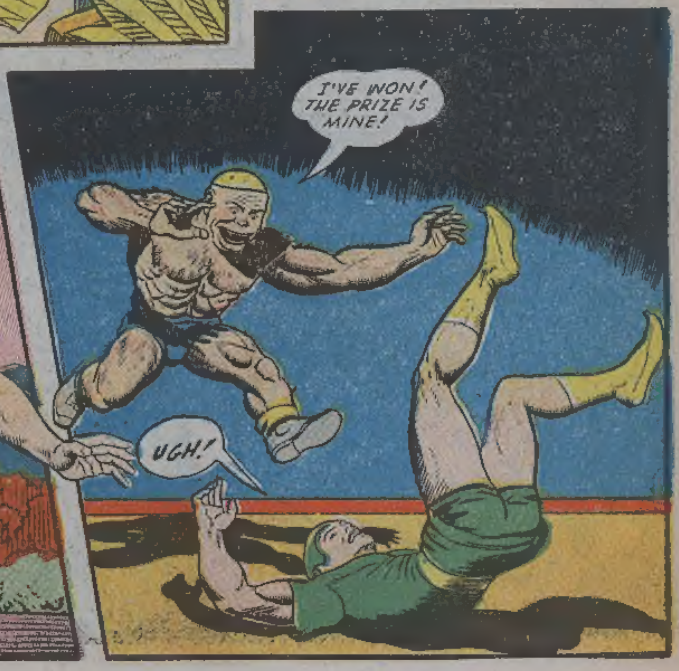
THEIR CAPTORS TAKE THEM BEFORE THE QUEEN.
WHO ARE THESE PEOPLE?
WE FOUND THEM IN THE FORBIDDEN PASSAGE!
WE WERE SEARCHING FOR YOU!.. THE CRUST-PEOPLE ARE PREPARING TO ATTACK!

HE LOOKS WORTHY TO BE MY MATE. THE GIRL IS TOO PRETTY TO BE NEAR HIM.
DWARFS, RETURN TO THE PASSAGE AND WARN US OF THE APPROACH OF THE CRUST-PEOPLE! SEND LOM TO ME!

A MISSHAPEN DWARF LUMBERS FORWARD.
THERE IS NO TIME TO WASTE! WE MUST PREPARE!
WHAT A PRIZE!
SILENCE! LOM, IF YOU PUT HIM ON HIS BACK YOU MAY MARRY THE GIRL!

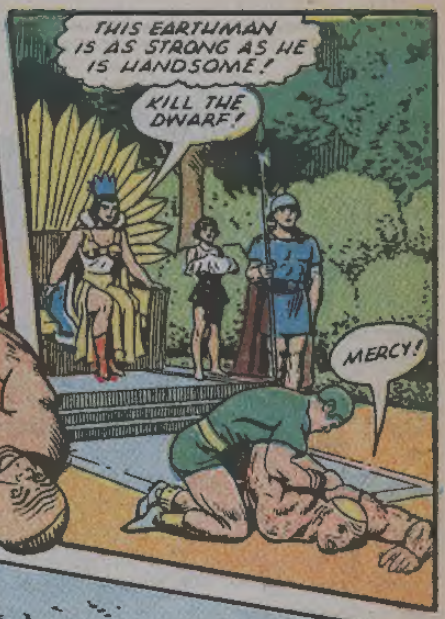

IGNORING DICK'S WARNING, THE QUEEN ORDERS THE TRIAL...
DON'T LET HIM TOUCH ME!
NEVER FEAR! I'LL TAKE CARE OF HIM!
I'LL BREAK HIS NECK!


POWERFUL ARMS LIFT DICK FROM THE GROUND.
NOW TO CRUSH HIM!

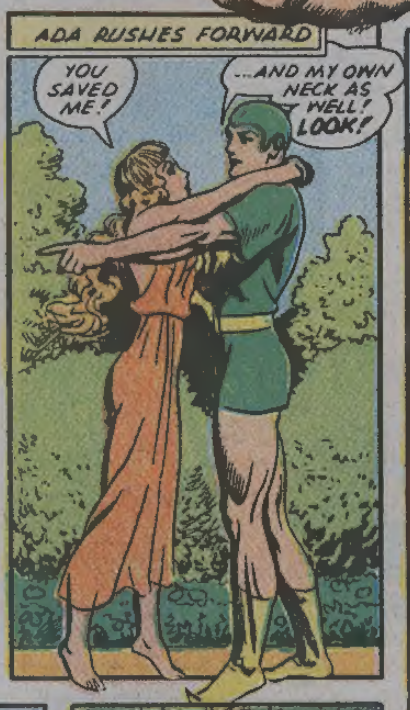

I'VE WON! THE PRIZE IS MINE!
UGH!

LEAPING TO CRUSH HIS FALLEN FOE, LOM IS MET BY DICK'S POWERFUL FEET!
I'LL TWIST HIS NECK... OHH...
NOT SO FAST!

THAT TAKES THE FIGHT OUT OF HIM! NOW TO FINISH THE JOB!


THIS EARTHMAN IS AS STRONG AS HE IS HANDSOME!
KILL THE DWARF!
MERCY!

I WILL NOT KILL HIM... WE HAVE WORK TO DO!


ADA RUSHES FORWARD
YOU SAVED ME!
...AND MY OWN NECK AS WELL! LOOK!

THEY COME! THE CRUST-PEOPLE COME!
THIS WILL STOP THEM!

URGED BY THE SPIRIT OF MARS, WAD LEADS THE CRUST-PEOPLE TO THE ATTACK

TURN YOUR FACES FROM ME, MY PEOPLE. I'LL TAKE CARE OF THEM!

HOLDING A COVERED OBJECT IN HER HAND, THE QUEEN CONFRONTS THE CRUST-PEOPLE...
YOU DARE ENTER MY KINGDOM!

AS THE CRUST PEOPLE ADVANCE, SHE WHIPS THE CLOTH FROM THE OBJECT AND EXPOSES A CRYSTAL.
THOUSANDS OF DAZZLING RAYS SHOOT FROM THE BRILLIANT STONE.
I'M BLIND!
NOOO!
SCREAMING IN PAIN, THE INVADERS RUSH TO ESCAPE.
THEIR EYES CAN'T STAND ITS RAYS! COME... YOU WILL TELL ME ABOUT EARTH!
WITH PLEASURE!
LATER, AS THE QUEEN LISTENS TO DICK DESCRIBE HIS PLANET, A FIGURE SKULKS IN THE BACKGROUND.
SHE TOLD HIM TO KILL ME!... I'LL HAVE MY REVENGE!
YEARS AGO, SHE SHOWED ME THIS OTHER SECRET PASSAGE!
SEVERAL HOURS LATER, LOM CONFRONTS WAD
I WILL SHOW YOU A WAY TO SURPRISE THESE PEOPLE!
LISTEN TO HIM!...YOU WILL RULE ZOG!
WE WILL FOLLOW YOU!
MEANWHILE THE QUEEN PLOTS TO WIN DICK.
I'LL HAVE THIS BOWL OF FRUIT PLACED IN FRONT OF ADA. THIS USP WILL TAKE CARE OF HER!

THE BANQUET IS PREPARED FOR THE GUESTS.
YOU WILL ENJOY THE FRUIT!... IT'S AS SWEET AS NECTAR!
I'LL TAKE A PIECE!
THAT FOUNTAIN IS OF PURE OIL!... LOOK AT IT SHINE IN THE SUNLIGHT!
YOU HAVE TREATED US SO KINDLY! THIS FRUIT LOOKS DELICIOUS!
MEANWHILE, THE CRUST-MEN EMERGE FROM THE SECRET PASSAGE.
LOOK! NOW IS THE TIME TO STRIKE!
SILENTLY THE HORDE CREEPS DOWN THE MOUNTAIN SIDE.
LOOK!
KILL THEM!
AS ADA GIVES THE ALARM, THEY HURL THEMSELVES ON THE UNSUSPECTING DINERS.
THE CRYSTAL IS IN MY CHAMBER! WE ARE TRAPPED!

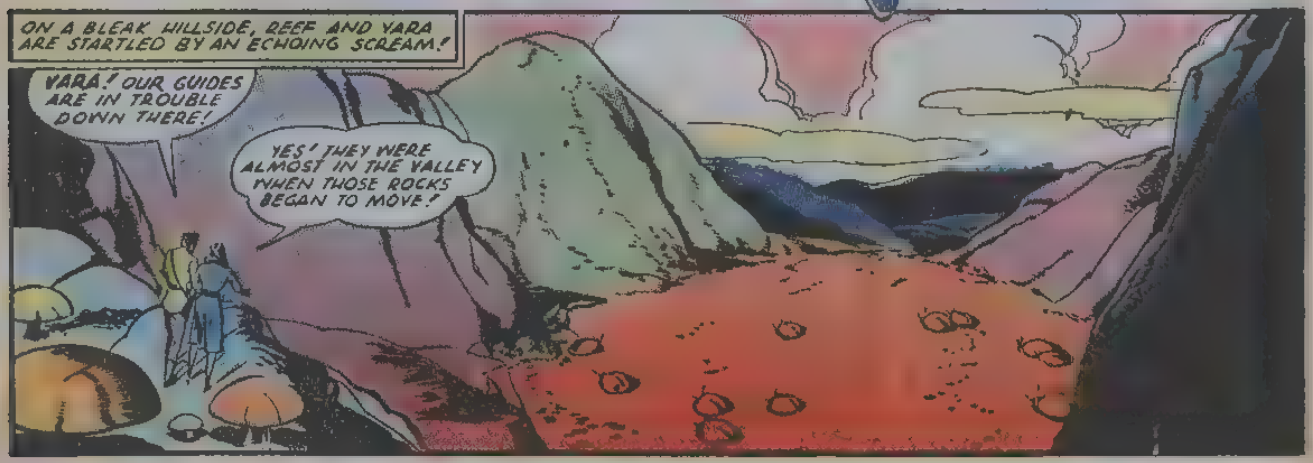
THE LEADER ATTACKS ADA
BETRAY YOUR PEOPLE AGAIN!
NOOO!
NOT SO FAST!
THIS IS A
UGH!
HELP!
I'LL KILL THE QUEEN!
IT'S NOT POLITE TO HIT A WOMAN!
DICK AND THE HIDDEN PEOPLE ARE FINALLY OVERWHELMED.
THE QUEEN FACES WAD
COME, YOU WILL RULE WITH ME! I WOULD FIND A WORTHY MATE!
MY MEN WILL DROWN THE OTHERS IN THE FOUNTAIN! I ACCEPT YOUR OFFER!
AT THE EDGE OF THE FOUNTAIN.
THROW THEM IN AND HOLD THEIR HEADS UNDER!
GOSH! I FORGOT!

THE OIL! I'LL MAKE A TORCH! THEY CAN'T STAND FIRE!
AS THE OIL-DIPPED TUNIC BLAZES, DICK ADVANCES TOWARD THE CRUST-PEOPLE
OUUH!
SUDDENLY, HE TURNS AND FLINGS THE FLAME INTO THE FOUNTAIN OF OIL
THIS WILL KILL THEM!
BLAZING SKYWARD, THE TERRIFIC FLAME DRAWS THE OXYGEN FROM THE BODIES OF THE INVADERS. AS THEY CRUMBLE AND FALL, MARS EMERGES FROM THE FALLEN LEADER
FOOLED BY AN EARTHMAN! BAH!
MEANWHILE A TRAITOR HELPS HIMSELF TO THE FRUIT!
THEY'LL NEVER SUSPECT THAT I BETRAYED THEM! CURSE THAT MAN! OHH!
STRICKEN BY THE USP, LOM POINTS TO ADA.
ADA IS THE TRUE QUEEN OF THE HIDDEN PEOPLE! YEARS AGO WHEN SHE WAS SMALL, SHE WAS EXILED. THE CRUST-PEOPLE BROUGHT HER UP AS THEIR SLAVE!
HE'S DEAD! I SUPPOSE YOU WILL RETURN TO EARTH!
WE'LL SAVE THAT TRIP FOR OUR HONEY-MOON!
MARS, GOD OF WAR, AIMS ANOTHER DEADLY THRUST AT CIVILIZATION IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF PLANET COMICS!

REEF RYAN

By Hugh Fitzhugh

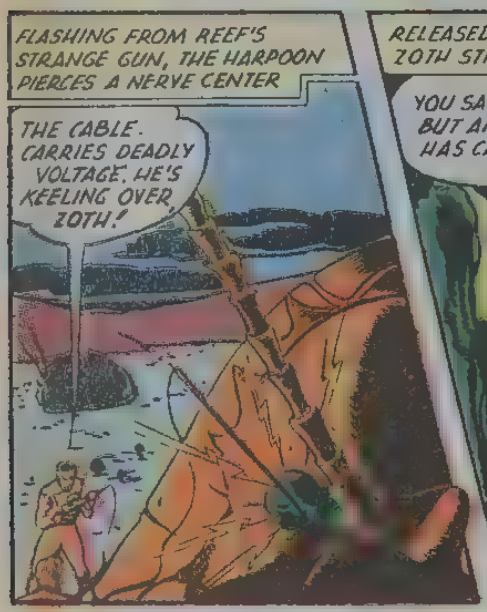
INSIDE NEPTUNE, REEF RYAN, LONE EXPLORER FROM EARTH, DISCOVERS THE STARVING CORAAMITES, AIDING THEIR FRANTIC SEARCH FOR FOOD, REEF AND VARA, THE KING'S DAUGHTER, REACH A FRUITFUL VALLEY WHERE REEF FINDS A FATE WORSE THAN DEATH AWAITING VARA!


ON A BLEAK HILLSIDE, REEF AND VARA ARE STARTLED BY AN ECHOING SCREAM!
VARA! OUR GUIDES ARE IN TROUBLE DOWN THERE!
YES! THEY WERE ALMOST IN THE VALLEY WHEN THOSE ROCKS BEGAN TO MOVE!

THOSE AREN'T ROCKS! THEY'RE SHELL-BACKED MONSTERS! I HOPE THERE'S STILL A CHANCE TO SAVE KOAB AND ZOTH. LET'S GO!

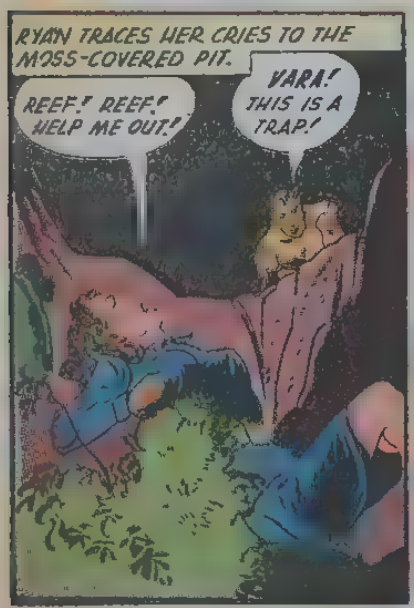
DASHING AFTER REEF, VARA FAILS TO BRIDGE THE LEAP BETWEEN TWO ROCKS AND PLUNGES INTO A MOSS COVERED PIT!

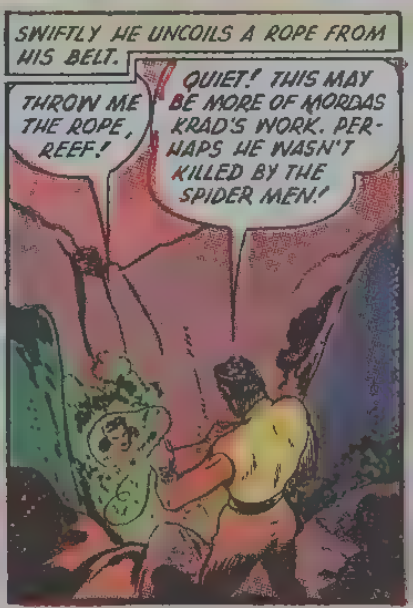
UNAWARE OF HER PERIL, REEF COMES UPON THE HIDEOUS BEASTS
HOLD STEADY, ZOTH. I'LL SHOOT MY HARPOON THROUGH HIS HEAD. THE ELECTRIC CURRENT WILL PARA-LYZE HIM.


FLASHING FROM REEF'S STRANGE GUN, THE HARPOON PIERCES A NERVE CENTER
THE CABLE CARRIES DEADLY VOLTAGE. HE'S KEELING OVER, ZOTH!

RELEASED FROM THE MONSTER'S GRIP, ZOTH STRUGGLES TO HIS FEET.
YOU SAVED MY LIFE! BUT ANOTHER ONE HAS CAUGHT KOAB.

SUDDENLY THEY HEAR A TERRIFIED CRY.
IT'S VARA! WHAT HAPPENED TO HER?
QUICK! TAKE MY HARPOON AND RESCUE KOAB, I'LL GO FIND VARA!


RYAN TRACES HER CRIES TO THE MOSS-COVERED PIT.
REEF! REEF! HELP ME OUT!
VARA! THIS IS A TRAP!


SWIFTLY HE UNCOILS A ROPE FROM HIS BELT.
THROW ME THE ROPE, REEF!
QUIET! THIS MAY BE MORE OF MORDAS KRAD'S WORK. PERHAPS HE WASN'T KILLED BY THE SPIDER MEN!

AT THE NEXT MOMENT NEPTUNE'S ARCH CRIMINAL LOOMS BEHIND REEF
MY TRAP CAUGHT ONE OF THEM. NOW I'LL TAKE RYAN BY SURPRISE!

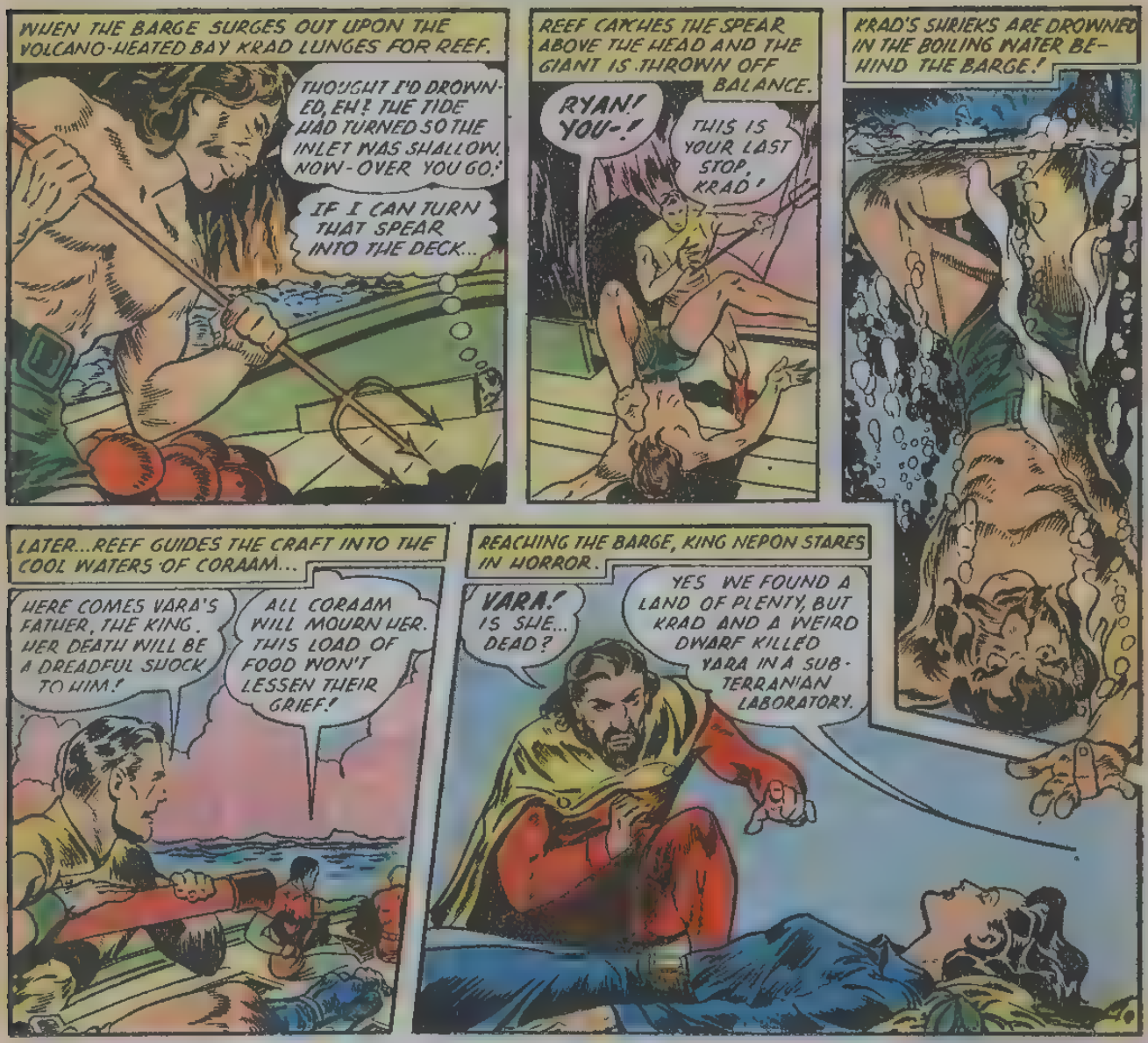
BUT RYAN WHIRLS AT THE SOUND OF KRAD'S HEAVY FEET!
YOU! KRAD!
ROAR! SAY YOUR PRAYERS, EARTHMAN! WHEN I'VE CRUSHED YOUR SKULL, I'LL TAKE KING NEPON'S DAUGHTER ALIVE!
WHY YOU SCUM OF THE EARTH! I'LL TEAR YOU LIMB FROM LIMB!
HE'S NOT KIDDING EITHER! UNLESS I HIT HIM FIRST HE'LL RUSH ME!
WITH A DARING CHARGE, REEF SMASHES INTO THE GIANT!
OOF!
CAN YOU STOMACH THIS ONE, KRAD?
MISSED! THIS ONE WILL KNOCK YOU INTO THE PIT! SUCH CUT!
VARA! LOOK OUT BELOW!
IN THE PIT KRAD GETS TO HIS FEET AND LUNGES FOR VARA
TOO LATE, RYAN! I'M TAKING VARA THROUGH A SECRET EXIT!

AND TO VARA'S HORROR KRAD TOUCHES THE ROCK WALL AND A HIDDEN DOOR SPRINGS OPEN
I TOOK A SHORT CUT TO ARRIVE AHEAD OF YOU AND COVER THIS PIT WITH MOSS. NOW WE'LL JOIN MY ASSOCIATE, MOX RADDO!
HURLING VARA INTO THE TUNNEL KRAD BOLTS THE DOOR AND GRASPS A LEVER...
THIS SWITCH TURNS A CROSS-FIRE OF ATOM SMASHING RAYS THROUGH THE PIT. WHEN RYAN DROPS DOWN HE'LL BE REDUCED TO A HEAP OF DUST.
DON'T YOU DARE DO THAT.. YOU BRUTE!
MEANWHILE REEF HAS TIED A ROCK TO HIS ROPE.
KRAD IS A SHREWD KILLER. LOWERING THIS STONE MAY REVEAL HOW HE INTENDS TO KILL ME.
ATOMIC RAYS SHATTER THE ROCK WITH A CRACKLING BLAST..
GHOSTS OF JUPITER! THOSE RAYS WOULD HAVE KILLED ME. I'LL NEED ZOTH AND KOAB'S HELP!
BELOW, KRAD JUMPS AT A CONCLUSION.
AH! THAT SMASHED RYAN TO DUST!
REEF. DEAD! I'D BETTER DO AS KRAD ORDERS UNTIL I SEE A GOOD CHANCE TO ESCAPE.
BREATHLESSLY, REEF JOINS THEIR GUIDES IN THE VALLEY..
KRAD ISN'T DEAD! HE CAUGHT VARA IN A PIT AND DRAGGED HER UNDERGROUND!
WE'LL GET HIM! BUT, LOOK... WE FOUND SOMETHING ODD ABOUT THESE MONSTER SHELLBACKS!
CHAINED! TO GUARD THE VALLEY!
RIGHT! AND I THINK WE KNOW WHERE TO FIND THEIR MASTER. FOLLOW ME!
MEANWHILE KRAD FORCES VARA FROM THE TUNNEL INTO A WEIRD LABORATORY WHERE A DWARF AWAITS THEM.
HERE SHE IS, MOX! BEAUTIFUL SPECIMEN, EH?
AH, YES! FINE WORK, KRAD! NOW WE'LL PUT HER IN A STATE OF SUSPENDED ANIMATION AND CARRY OUT OUR PLANS TO ENSLAVE HER PEOPLE.

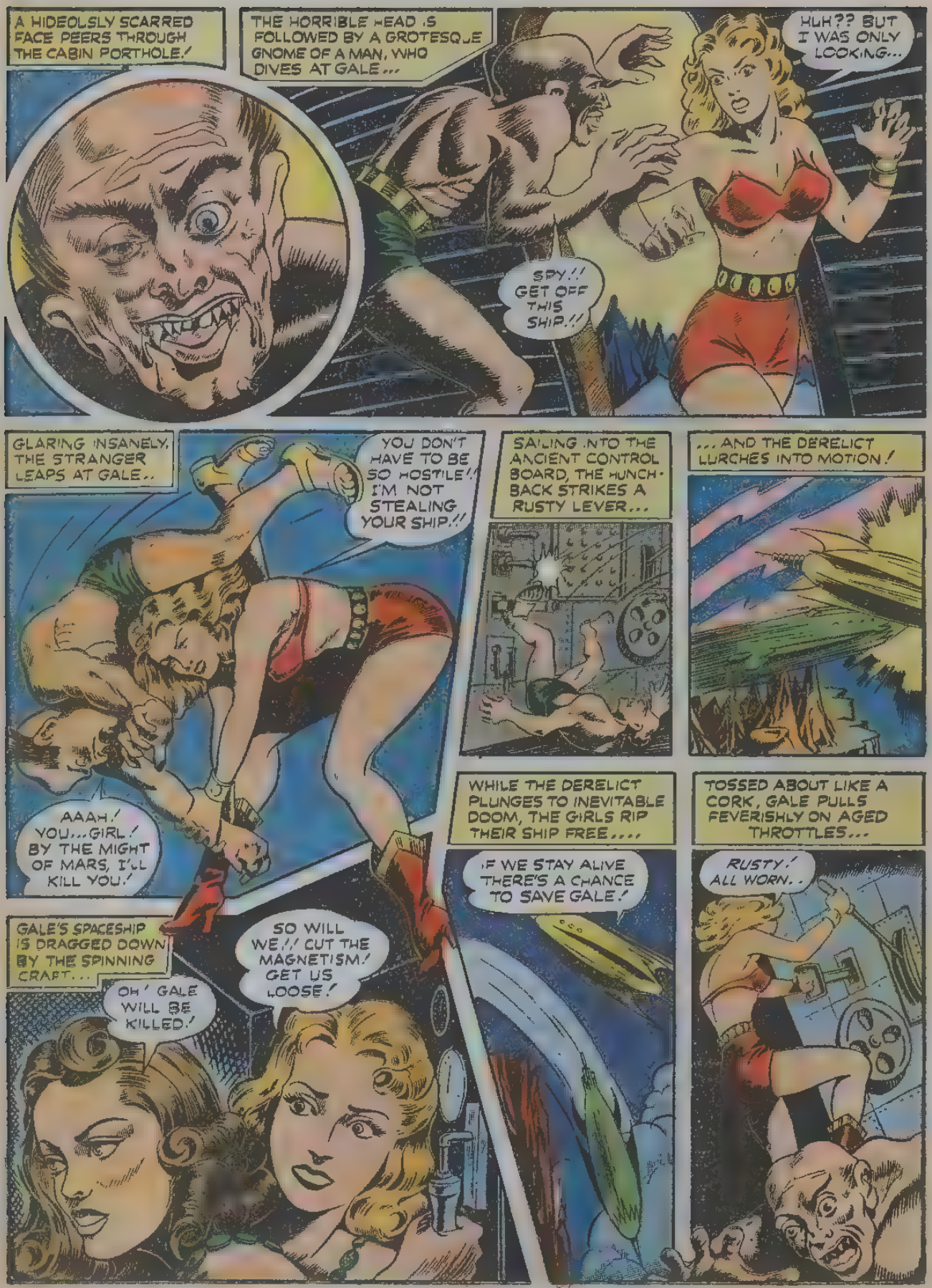
WITH KRAD'S AID THE HIDEOUS DWARF STRAPS VARA INTO AN ELECTRO-HYPNOTIC CHAIR.
NOW! PRESS BUTTONS SEVEN AND TEN ON THE CONTROL PANEL, KRAD, AND SHE WILL LAPSE INTO A COMA!
NO! STOP!
LAUGHING INSANELY, KRAD CARRIES OUT THE FIENDISH ORDER.
AND ELECTRO-HYPNOTIC RAYS PARALYZE VARA'S BODY AND BRAIN.
MEANWHILE, REEF AND THE GUIDES EVADE THE CHAINED SHELLBACKS AND REACH A NEARBY INLET TO NEPTUNE'S SEA.
ENOUGH FOOD IN THIS VALLEY TO FEED CORAAM FOREVER. AND THIS INLET MAY LEAD US TO THE PLACE WHERE KRAD'S GOT VARA!
HE HOLDS HIS HARPOON GUN READY FOR ACTION AS THEY WADE INTO THE DARK CAVE!
EASY, NOW! THIS ENTRANCE MUST BE GUARDED!
AHEAD, REEF! THOSE QUEER BLINKING EYES!
TAKING STEADY AIM, REEF FIRES
NOT EYES! ELECTRO SENTINEL BEAMS! MY HARPOON WILL SHORT CIRCUIT 'EM!
SIZZLING ARCS FLARE OUT AS THE HARPOON HITS ITS MARK
ALL CLEAR! BUT THAT SOUND WILL AROUSE WHOEVER'S AHEAD. WE'LL HAVE TO SWIM UNDERWATER NOW!
THE SWIFT CURRENT CATCHES THEM AS THEY DIVE INTO THE STREAM.
DARK! CAN'T SEE WHERE WE'RE GOING. HOPE THERE ARE NO DEATH TRAPS!

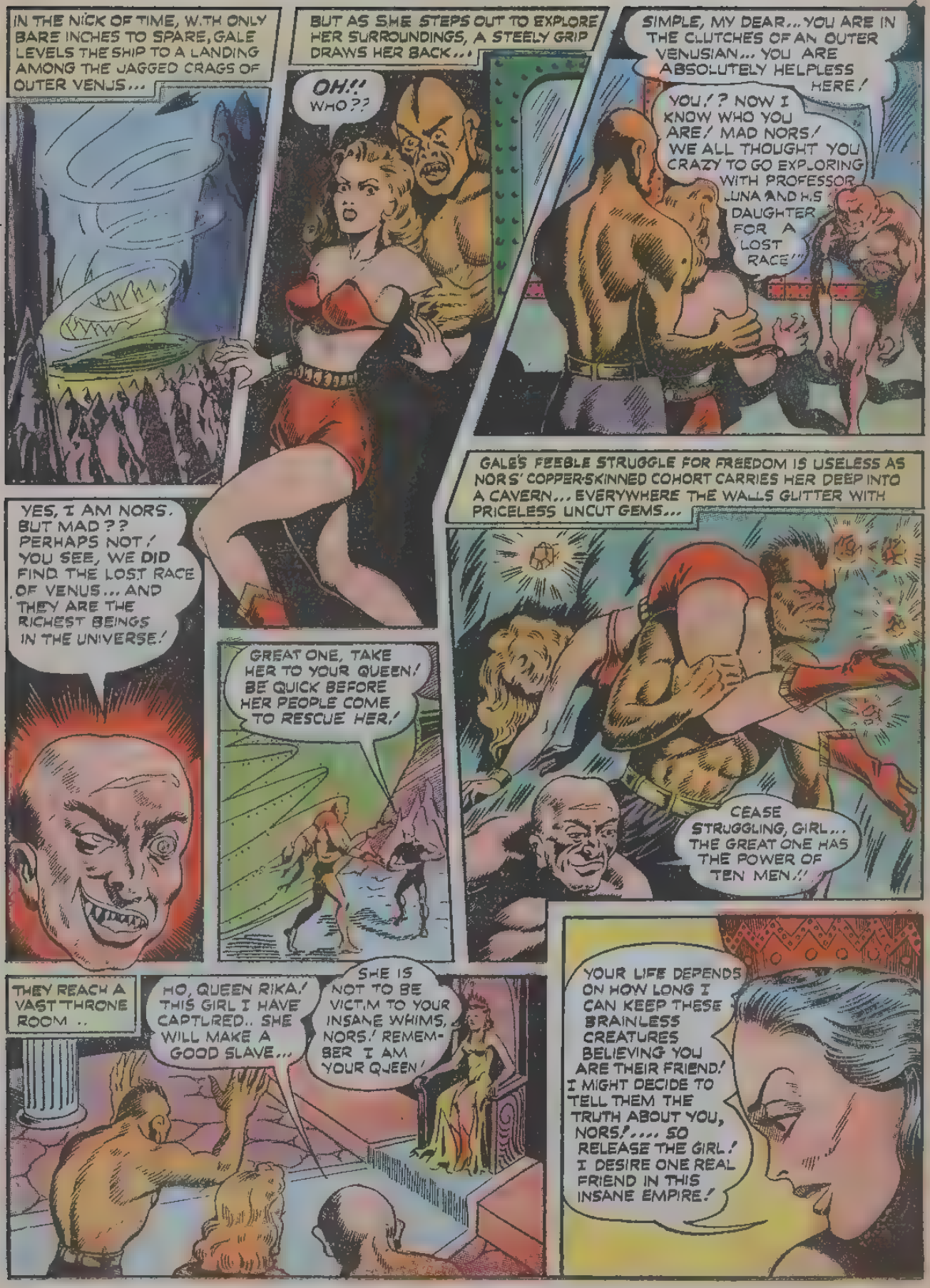
IN THE LABORATORY AHEAD KRAD AND MOX FAIL TO HEAR THE SWIMMERS
THE SEA ROUTE TO CORAAM! WE'LL PUT VARA ON THE BARGE LOADED WITH FOOD WHICH I CAN GUIDE FROM HERE BY REMOTE CONTROL
AH, I SEE! WITH FOOD AS BAIT AND VARA'S SEMI-DEAD CONDITION AS A THREAT, HER PEOPLE WILL OBEY OUR ORDER TO COME HERE UNARMED. THEN WE SHALL ENSLAVE THEM AS FIELD WORKERS, AND MAKE OUR FORTUNE EXPORTING THE FRUITS OF THE VALLEY!
SUDDENLY THREE HEADS APPEAR FROM THE SIDE TOUCHING THE INLET
THEIR BACKS ARE TURNED. WE CAN SURPRISE THEM
WAIT TILL I GET MY HANDS ON KRAD!
REEF AND HIS FRIENDS ATTACK.
THIS TIME YOU'RE NOT COMING THROUGH ALIVE, MISTER KRAD!
OUT OF OUR WAY, YUH SCRAWNY RUN!
THE HIDEOUS DWARF CRASHES INTO THE CONTROL PANEL
HE REACHES FOR THE ARRAY OF BUTTONS
BACK! ALL OF YOU! I'LL TURN ON THE ATOM SMASHER RAYS!
AS THE WEAPON PIERCES HIS BODY, MOX UTTERS A GURGLING SHRIEK OF DEATH . .
BUT BEFORE HE CAN ACT, KOAB FIRES REEF'S HARPOON GUN
THAT WILL ELECTROCUTE HIM
MEANWHILE REEF HAS FLOORED KRAD BUT VARA'S BODY DRAWS HIS ATTENTION!
THEY KILLED HER!
I'LL STAB HIM THROUGH THE NECK!

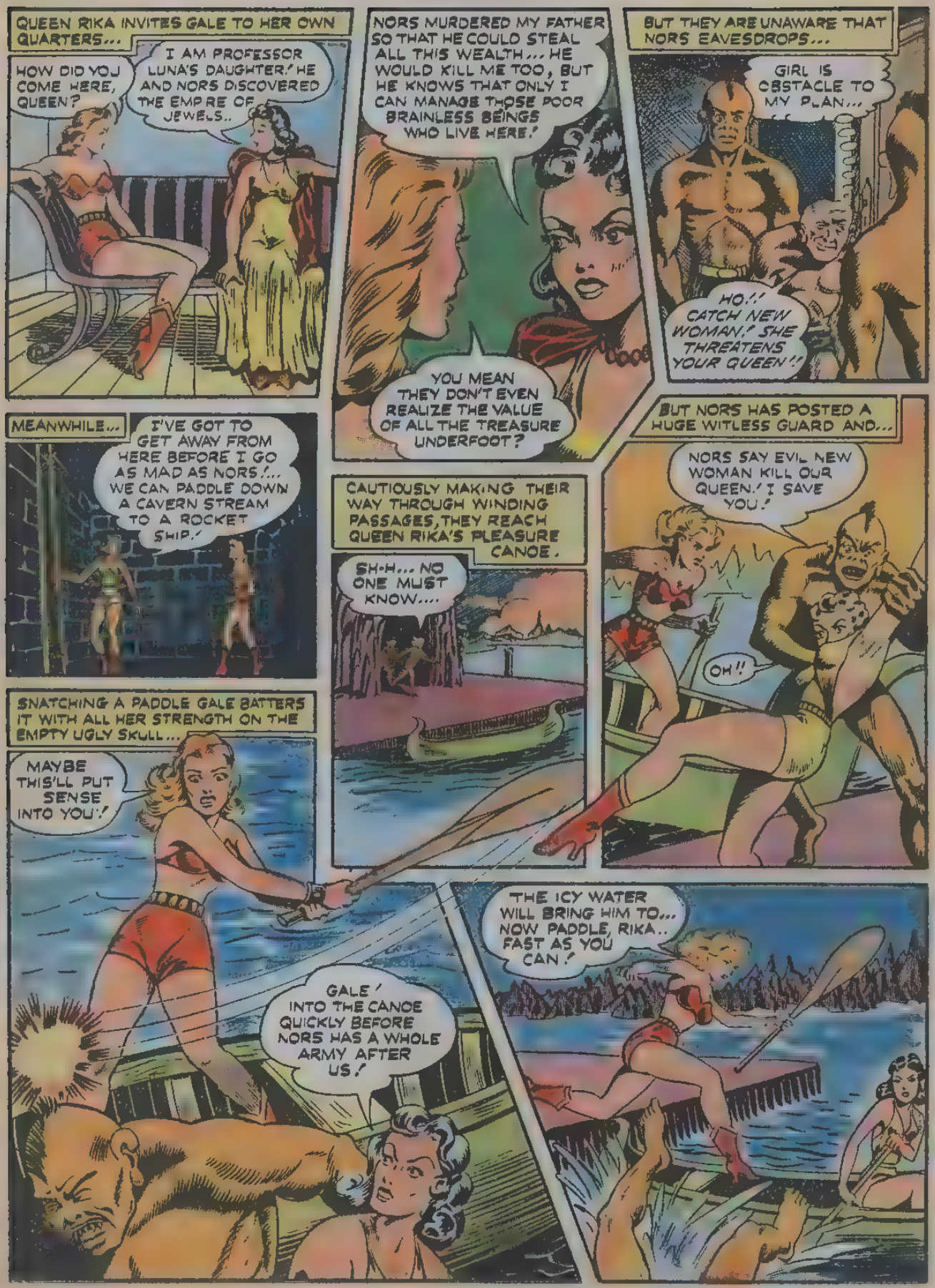
BUT ZOTH'S FOOT FLIES FASTER THAN THE KNIFE...
WHEW! THANKS, ZOTH!
THE FILTHY BRUTE ALMOST GOT YOU, REEF!
BEFORE KRAD CAN ARISE, THE THREE GRASP HIM AND START SWINGING HIS HEAVY BODY.
HE CAN'T SWIM HEAVE HIM INTO THE INLET!
LET ME DOWN! YOU CAN'T REVIVE YARA WITHOUT MY HELP!
SCREAMING IN TERROR, KRAD SAILS INTO THE DARK WATER
I WONDER IF HE WAS LYING TO SAVE HIS LIFE?
QUICK! LET'S EXAMINE YARA AND FIND OUT!
YARA FAILS TO RESPOND TO THEIR TOUCH AND VOICES...
NO PULSE BEAT! SHE'S DEAD!
SOLEMNLY THEY LOWER THE RIGID BODY
WE'LL TAKE HER BACK TO CORAAM. FOR BURIAL. THERE'S A BARGE TIED UP AHEAD AND LOADED WITH FOOD!
I'LL WRECK THIS LAB THEN JOIN YOU!
IN A FEW MOMENTS THEY CARRY YARA'S BODY ABOARD THE BARGE
HERE COMES, ZOTH! HE SET THE PLACE ON FIRE!
GOOD! BUT WE CAN'T BE SURE WHAT LIES AHEAD.
SUDDENLY A SWIFT CURRENT SWEEPS THEM INTO INKY DARKNESS
QUICK CHANGES IN THE TIDES HERE FROM THE NEPTUNE SEA THIS INLET SHOULD LEAD US BACK TO CORAAM!
IN THE GLOOMY PASSAGE A HULKING FIGURE RISES FROM THE BARGE'S CARGO MORDAS KRAD!
THE MOMENT THIS SCOW EMERGES INTO THE BOILING BASIN, I'LL PITCH THEM OVERBOARD TO BE COOKED ALIVE!

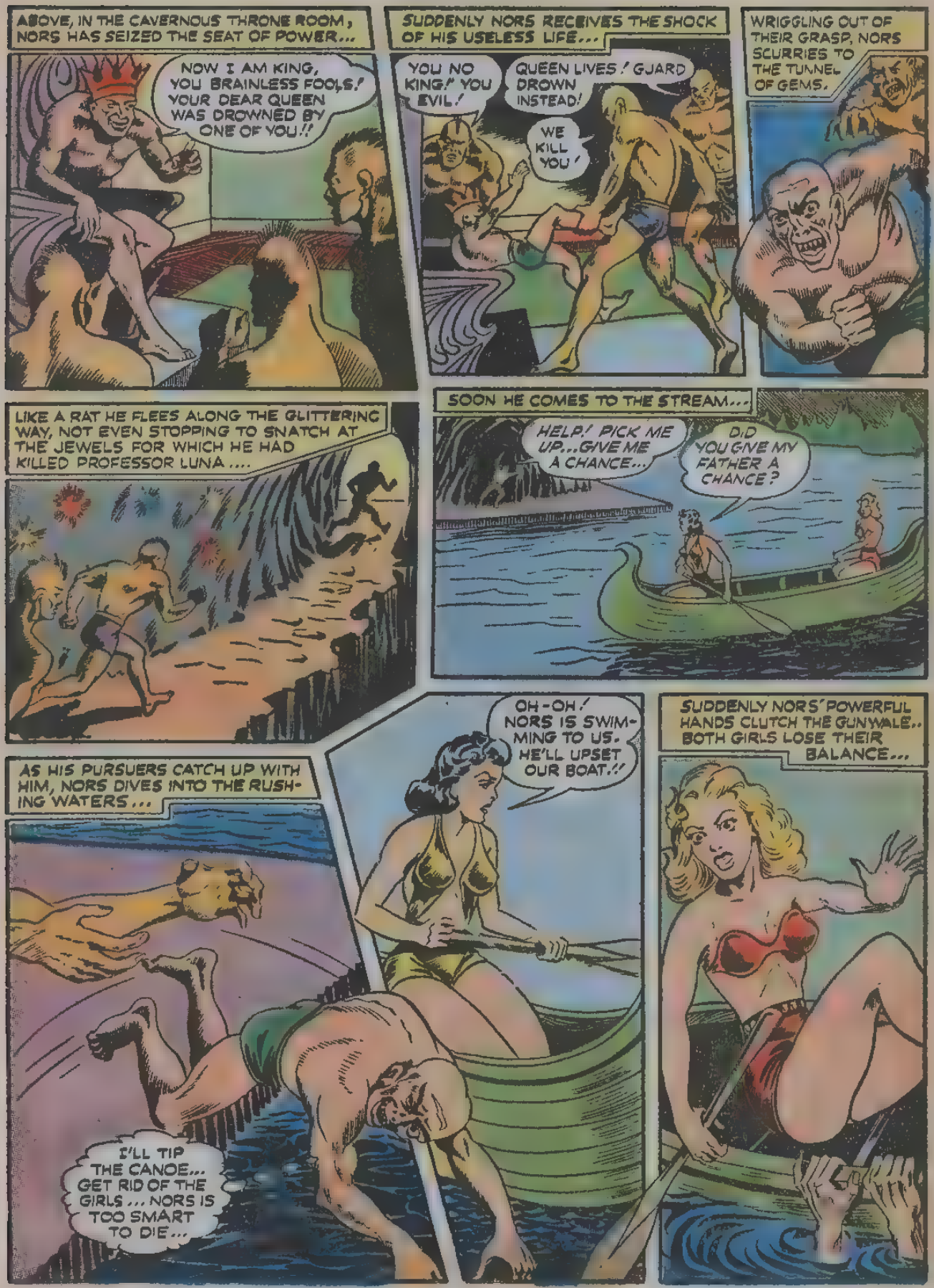

WHEN THE BARGE SURGES OUT UPON THE VOLCANO-HEATED BAY KRAD LUNGES FOR REEF.
THOUGHT I'D DROWNED, EH? THE TIDE HAD TURNED SO THE INLET WAS SHALLOW. NOW - OVER YOU GO!
IF I CAN TURN THAT SPEAR INTO THE DECK...
REEF CATCHES THE SPEAR ABOVE THE HEAD AND THE GIANT IS THROWN OFF BALANCE.
RYAN! YOU-!
THIS IS YOUR LAST STOP, KRAD!
KRAD'S SHRIEKS ARE DROWNED IN THE BOILING WATER BEHIND THE BARGE!
LATER...REEF GUIDES THE CRAFT INTO THE COOL WATERS OF CORAAM...
HERE COMES VARA'S FATHER, THE KING. HER DEATH WILL BE A DREADFUL SHOCK TO HIM!
ALL CORAAM WILL MOURN HER. THIS LOAD OF FOOD WON'T LESSEN THEIR GRIEF!
REACHING THE BARGE, KING NEPON STARES IN HORROR.
VARA! IS SHE... DEAD?
YES WE FOUND A LAND OF PLENTY, BUT KRAD AND A WEIRD DWARF KILLED VARA IN A SUBTERRANIAN LABORATORY.
AS REEF TRIES TO PASS THE BODY TO KING NEPON, IT SLIPS FROM HIS GRASP.
QUICK! GET HER BEFORE SHE'S SWEPT AWAY BY THE CURRENT!
THE SHOCK OF COLD WATER SNAPS VARA OUT OF HER HYPNOTIC STATE.
WHY, SHE'S ALIVE!
REEF LEAPS IN AND HELPS THE DAZED GIRL ASHORE...
WHERE AM I? OH, REEF! WE'RE HOME!
AND WITH FOOD ENOUGH FOR A FEAST.
THANK STARS! YOU TWO GET IN THE WORST JAMS BUT GUESS THAT CAN'T BE AVOIDED ON NEPTUNE!
NEPTUNE'S WEIRD PERILS DEFY REEF RYAN'S DARING EXPLORATION IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF PLANET COMICS!

Gale Allen
and the
GIRL SQUADRON
By Douglas McKee
RECEIVING REPORTS OF A DERELICT SPACESHIP BLOCKING THE PLANET LANES, GALE AND SOME OF HER SQUADRON ZOOM TO OUTER VENUS WHERE THE DERELICT IS SAID TO BE...
SOON GALE SPOTS THE STRANGE CRAFT.
HITCH ONTO IT...I'M GOING ABOARD.'
POWERFUL MAGNETIC CURRENTS DRAW THE SHIPS TOGETHER... GALE CLAMBERS DOWN A ROPE LADDER...
BE CAREFUL, GALE.'
DON'T WORRY.' THERE'S PROBABLY NOTH NG BIGGER THAN A MOUSE ON THAT SHIP.'
BUT AS GALE ROAMS THROUGH THE SEEMINGLY DESERTED CRAFT....
FOOTSTEPS! WHO'S THERE?


A HIDEOUSLY SCARRED FACE PEERS THROUGH THE CABIN PORTHOLE!
THE HORRIBLE HEAD IS FOLLOWED BY A GROTESQUE GNOME OF A MAN, WHO DIVES AT GALE...
HUH?? BUT I WAS ONLY LOOKING...
SPY!! GET OFF THIS SHIP!!
GLARING INSANELY, THE STRANGER LEAPS AT GALE..
YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE SO HOSTILE!! I'M NOT STEALING YOUR SHIP!!
AAAH! YOU...GIRL! BY THE MIGHT OF MARS, I'LL KILL YOU!
SAILING INTO THE ANCIENT CONTROL BOARD, THE HUNCH-BACK STRIKES A RUSTY LEVER...
...AND THE DERELICT LURCHES INTO MOTION!
WHILE THE DERELICT PLUNGES TO INEVITABLE DOOM, THE GIRLS RIP THEIR SHIP FREE....
IF WE STAY ALIVE THERE'S A CHANCE TO SAVE GALE!
TOSSED ABOUT LIKE A CORK, GALE PULLS FEVERISHLY ON AGED THROTTLES...
RUSTY! ALL WORN..
GALE'S SPACESHIP IS DRAGGED DOWN BY THE SPINNING CRAFT...
OH! GALE WILL BE KILLED!
SO WILL WE!! CUT THE MAGNETISM! GET US LOOSE!

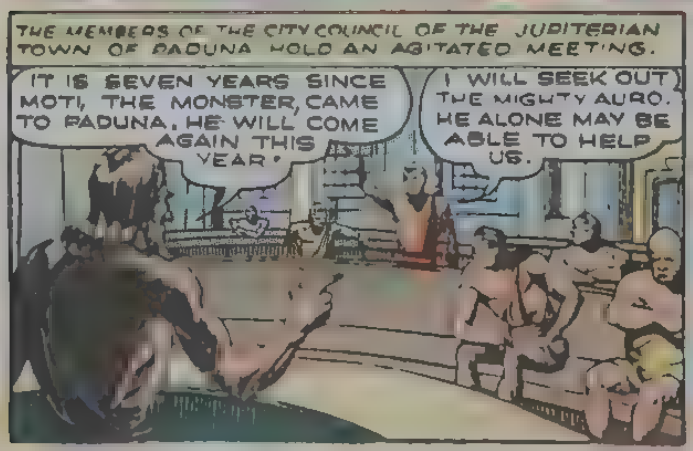

IN THE NICK OF TIME, W.TH ONLY BARE INCHES TO SPARE, GALE LEVELS THE SHIP TO A LANDING AMONG THE JAGGED CRAGS OF OUTER VENUS...
BUT AS SHE STEPS OUT TO EXPLORE HER SURROUNDINGS, A STEELY GRIP DRAWS HER BACK...
OH!! WHO??
SIMPLE, MY DEAR... YOU ARE IN THE CLUTCHES OF AN OUTER VENUSIAN... YOU ARE ABSOLUTELY HELPLESS HERE!
YOU!? NOW I KNOW WHO YOU ARE! MAD NORS! WE ALL THOUGHT YOU CRAZY TO GO EXPLORING WITH PROFESSOR LUNA AND H.S DAUGHTER FOR A LOST RACE!"
GALE'S FEEBLE STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM IS USELESS AS NORS' COPPER-SKINNED COHORT CARRIES HER DEEP INTO A CAVERN... EVERYWHERE THE WALLS GLITTER WITH PRICELESS UNCUT GEMS...
YES, I AM NORS. BUT MAD?? PERHAPS NOT! YOU SEE, WE DID FIND THE LOST RACE OF VENUS... AND THEY ARE THE RICHEST BEINGS IN THE UNIVERSE!
GREAT ONE, TAKE HER TO YOUR QUEEN! BE QUICK BEFORE HER PEOPLE COME TO RESCUE HER!
CEASE STRUGGLING, GIRL... THE GREAT ONE HAS THE POWER OF TEN MEN!!
THEY REACH A VAST THRONE ROOM ..
HO, QUEEN RIKA! THIS GIRL I HAVE CAPTURED.. SHE WILL MAKE A GOOD SLAVE...
SHE IS NOT TO BE VICTIM TO YOUR INSANE WHIMS, NORS! REMEMBER I AM YOUR QUEEN!
YOUR LIFE DEPENDS ON HOW LONG I CAN KEEP THESE BRAINLESS CREATURES BELIEVING YOU ARE THEIR FRIEND! I MIGHT DECIDE TO TELL THEM THE TRUTH ABOUT YOU, NORS!.... SO RELEASE THE GIRL! I DESIRE ONE REAL FRIEND IN THIS INSANE EMPIRE!


QUEEN RIKA INVITES GALE TO HER OWN QUARTERS...
HOW DID YOU COME HERE, QUEEN?
I AM PROFESSOR LUNA'S DAUGHTER.' HE AND NORS DISCOVERED THE EMPIRE OF JEWELS..
NORS MURDERED MY FATHER SO THAT HE COULD STEAL ALL THIS WEALTH... HE WOULD KILL ME TOO, BUT HE KNOWS THAT ONLY I CAN MANAGE THOSE POOR BRAINLESS BEINGS WHO LIVE HERE.'
YOU MEAN THEY DON'T EVEN REALIZE THE VALUE OF ALL THE TREASURE UNDERFOOT?
BUT THEY ARE UNAWARE THAT NORS EAVESDROPS...
GIRL IS OBSTACLE TO MY PLAN...
HO!' CATCH NEW WOMAN.' SHE THREATENS YOUR QUEEN!'
MEANWHILE...
I'VE GOT TO GET AWAY FROM HERE BEFORE I GO AS MAD AS NORS!... WE CAN PADDLE DOWN A CAVERN STREAM TO A ROCKET SHIP.'
CAUTIOUSLY MAKING THEIR WAY THROUGH WINDING PASSAGES, THEY REACH QUEEN RIKA'S PLEASURE CANOE.
SH-H... NO ONE MUST KNOW....
BUT NORS HAS POSTED A HUGE WITLESS GUARD AND...
NORS SAY EVIL NEW WOMAN KILL OUR QUEEN.' I SAVE YOU.'
OH!!
SNATCHING A PADDLE GALE BATTERS IT WITH ALL HER STRENGTH ON THE EMPTY UGLY SKULL...
MAYBE THIS'LL PUT SENSE INTO YOU'.'
GALE' INTO THE CANOE QUICKLY BEFORE NORS HAS A WHOLE ARMY AFTER US!'
THE ICY WATER WILL BRING HIM TO... NOW PADDLE, RIKA.. FAST AS YOU CAN!'


ABOVE, IN THE CAVERNOUS THRONE ROOM, NORS HAS SEIZED THE SEAT OF POWER...
NOW I AM KING, YOU BRAINLESS FOOLS! YOUR DEAR QUEEN WAS DROWNED BY ONE OF YOU!!
SUDDENLY NORS RECEIVES THE SHOCK OF HIS USELESS LIFE...
YOU NO KING!" YOU EVIL!
QUEEN LIVES! GJARD DROWN INSTEAD!
WE KILL YOU!
WRIGGLING OUT OF THEIR GRASP, NORS SCURRIES TO THE TUNNEL OF GEMS.
LIKE A RAT HE FLEES ALONG THE GLITTERING WAY, NOT EVEN STOPPING TO SNATCH AT THE JEWELS FOR WHICH HE HAD KILLED PROFESSOR LUNA....
SOON HE COMES TO THE STREAM...
HELP! PICK ME UP...GIVE ME A CHANCE...
DID YOU GIVE MY FATHER A CHANCE?
AS HIS PURSUERS CATCH UP WITH HIM, NORS DIVES INTO THE RUSHING WATERS...
OH-OH! NORS IS SWIMMING TO US. HE'LL UPSET OUR BOAT!!
I'LL TIP THE CANOE... GET RID OF THE GIRLS... NORS IS TOO SMART TO DIE...
SUDDENLY NORS' POWERFUL HANDS CLUTCH THE GUNWALE.. BOTH GIRLS LOSE THEIR BALANCE...

THE SLIGHT CRAFT, KEEL UP, FLOATS BEYOND THEIR REACH..
WHILE NORS TRIES CLUMSILY TO RIGHT THE CAPSIZED CANOE, GALE AND RIKA SWIM BACK...
HERE! I CAN KEEP HIM UNDER WITH THIS NECK-LOCK!
BUT THEY HAD NOT COUNTED ON NORS' VICIOUS STRENGTH... BREAKING GALE'S GRIP, HE SWINGS AROUND TO STRANGLE AND DROWN RIKA...
SUDDENLY HUGE COPPER-SKIN BODIES CLEAVE THE WATER!
THEY'LL KILL NORS!
CLOSE SHAVE, RIKA... YOUR BRAINLESS SUBJECTS EVIDENTLY HAVE ENOUGH SENSE TO PUNISH THE RIGHT PERSON!!
OH, GALE! HOW CAN I EVER THANK THEM? THEY ARE BRAINLESS, BUT HARMLESS, TOO.. AND THEY LOVED AND TRUSTED ME.
I HATE TO LEAVE THEM, BUT...
YOU'LL BE HAPPIER WITH US, RIKA.. WE'RE YOUR OWN PEOPLE THE BRAINLESS ONES WILL SOON FORGET.
THEY SHOOT INTO BRIGHT DAYLIGHT..
LOOK, RIKA! ABOVE!! MY GIRL SQUADRON IS CIRCLING...
WAIT TILL THEY HEAR WHAT HAPPENED! WE ARE UNDOUBTEDLY THE ONLY WOMEN WHO EVER RAN AWAY FROM A FORTUNE IN JEWELS DELIBERATELY!
GALE, I SHALL BE HAPPY IF I NEVER SEE A GEM AGAIN!
THERE'S NEW ADVENTURE AHEAD FOR GALE ALLEN IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF, PLANET COMICS!

AURO
Lord of Jupiter
by Dick Charles
MURDER AND DESTRUCTION THREATEN AURO'S PLANET OF JUPITER!.. A ONE-EYED MONSTER RUNS AMUCK, SWEEPING ASIDE EVERYTHING IN ITS PATH UNTIL THE LORD OF JUPITER GOES FORTH TO GIVE BATTLE TO THE MONSTROSITY OF DEATH!


THE MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE JUPITERIAN TOWN OF PADUNA HOLD AN AGITATED MEETING.
IT IS SEVEN YEARS SINCE MOTI, THE MONSTER, CAME TO PADUNA. HE WILL COME AGAIN THIS YEAR.
I WILL SEEK OUT THE MIGHTY AURO. HE ALONE MAY BE ABLE TO HELP US.

AURO, MOTI, THE MONSTER WHO CARRIES OFF THE CREAM OF OUR YOUTH EVERY SEVEN YEARS, IS COMING SOON. WE NEED YOUR HELP.
END TO HIS FIENDISH CAREER THIS TIME.

DRIVING A FIRE-BREATHING BRONTOLOCHUS BEFORE HIM, MOTI, THE DREADED MONSTER, TEARS THROUGH THE JUPITERIAN FOREST.
FASTER, BRONTO, MY BEAUTY.. WE HASTEN TO PADUNA!
PADUNA SHALL PAY US TRIBUTE ONCE MORE WITH THE FLOWER OF HER MEN AND WOMEN.. HA HA!
A SURPRISE AWAITS YOU, DOER OF EVIL DEEDS!
GREETINGS, PRINCE OF UGLINESS!
OOF! WHAT PUNY WRETCH IS THIS WHO STRIKES SO HARD?
I WILL CRUSH YOU AS I WOULD A WORM!
MOTI TALKS MIGHTY WORDS.. BUT AURO ACTS!

THE BRONTOLOCHUS SEES HIS MASTER'S PLIGHT...
AND WITH A MIGHTY BLAST, HURLS AURO HIGH INTO THE AIR.
MY FAITHFUL BRONTO HAS COME TO MY AID..
HA..THE UPSTART IS DEAD!
ON TO PADUNA!
THE FIRE-BREATHING BEAST THUNDERS UP TO PADUNA'S GATES!
HELP! IT IS MOTI!
AH! WHAT A PRIZE TO CARRY BACK TO MY CASTLE!

AWAY, BRONTO, MY PRETTY..THAT WE MAY SOONER FEAST UPON OUR TENDER CAPTIVE!
IN THE MEANTIME, AURO REGAINS CONSCIOUSNESS.
ONLY RIKI, THE ANCIENT SAGE, CAN TELL ME HOW TO COPE WITH THIS MONSTER AND HIS BRONTOLOCHUS. I MUST GO TO HIM!
OH, HOLDER OF THE SECRETS OF TIME, I HAVE COME TO LEARN THE MEANS OF DESTROYING THE MONSTER, MOTI, AND HIS FEARSOME BEAST!
HIGH ABOVE THE CHALK CLIFFS TO THE EAST DWELLS A MIGHTY SCAVENGER OF THE SKIES..THIS WINGED DEATH STANDS GUARD OVER A GREAT SWORD TEMPERED BY LIGHTNING..WITH THIS SWORD ALONE CAN THE BRONTOLOCHUS WHO GUARDS MOTI BE SLAIN.. AND THEN YOU CAN DEAL WITH HIS MASTER.
AURO ARRIVES AT THE CHALK CLIFFS.
YONDER UGLY BIRD MUST BE THE ONE OF WHOM RIKI SPOKE!
R-RAWK!

R-RAWK
PREPARE TO DIE, GIANT OF THE SKY!
AS THE BIRD FLAPS HIS HUGE WINGS IN ANGER.. AURO SEIZES ONE OF THEM, AND..
GOOD! I CAN REACH HIS NECK NOW!
THE MIGHTY SWORD YOU GUARD SHALL NOW BE MINE!
BUT, AS THE BIRD FALLS TO ITS DEATH, AURO FALLS WITH IT.
FORTUNE IS WITH ME. THIS BRANCH HAS SAVED MY LIFE!
AGAIN AURO CLIMBS TO THE TOP OF THE CLIFF.
AHH! THE SWORD!

THE HOUR OF VENGEANCE IS AT HAND!
THE DRAWBRIDGE IS UP... I SHALL HAVE TO SWIM ACROSS THE MOAT!
I HOPE I GET TO FIRM FOOTING BEFORE IT SPIES ME!
AT THE APPROACH TO THE CASTLE, THE BRONTOLOCHUS STANDS GUARD.
WE MEET AGAIN, SPAWN OF THE DEVIL, AND THIS TIME I SHALL ROLL YOUR HEAD AMONG THE ROCKS!
EVEN YOUR THICK HIDE CANNOT WITHSTAND THIS TERRIBLE SWORD!
UNDER THE FOOT AND THEN UP FOR ITS HEAD!
NOW FOR MOT!

MOTI'S PRISONERS!? HOW CRUEL AND VICIOUS THE MONSTER IS!
SO! THE PUNY ONE LIVES, AND DARES DEFY ME!
NOW YOU ARE FREE!
THIS TIME, I'LL MAKE CERTAIN YOU DIE!
NAY, MONSTER, IT IS YOU WHO SHALL PERISH!
MISERABLE CREATURE!
FOUL FIEND!
AGH-H!
THIS IS THE END YOU DESERVE!
YOU HAVE SAVED THE LIVES OF MANY OF US, AURO. YOUR REWARD SHALL BE GREAT!
TO SEE PEACE AND JUSTICE ON JUPITER IS REWARD ENOUGH FOR AURO!
AURO WILL LEAD YOU TO NEW HAIR-RAISING ADVENTURES IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF PLANET COMICS

MUTINEERS FROM DEATH ROW

BY NEWTON HALEY

Roaring louder than a squadron of heavy bombers, the space ship *Helio* arrowed through the pale mist above the Earth's stratosphere on a course calculated by its skipper, young Steve Thatcher, to reach Jupiter in three months.

"That's unless we run into unforeseen difficulty," Steve had added with a wry grin when the reporters interviewed him before the takeoff.

When the *Helio's* fiery wake was no longer visible to watchers on Earth, trouble had already begun inside its tungsten steel hull. Steve was sitting stiffly in the control seat, his hard blue eyes flashing from dials to levers on the board before him when he felt the cold steel of a ray-muzzle on his neck.

"We're taking over now," came the husky voice of Felix Mattore. "You're gonna tell us how to bring this star boat back to Earth."

Steve's hand darted out to press a small switch that set the robot control. He knew that Mattore wouldn't dare crash the gun down on his skull, for he was the only man aboard who knew the secrets of operating the *Helio*.

"Okay," Steve said with a chuckle. "You men can take over now. And see how far you get!" He regarded the swarthy, beetle-browed killer with an amused grin as Mattore's dark eyes shifted nervously from the control panel. Like the rest of the crew of convicts, Mattore knew as little about the operation of the ship as Steve knew about the sinister crimes that had sent these men to Death Row.

Steve rose to his feet and pushed by Mattore. "Come on back and we'll talk it over with the gang," he said.

In the living quarters amidship four pairs of suspicious eyes gleamed up sullenly from a card table. Steve leaned back against the hull to watch them. There was Sniffer Burns, a twisted-face runt who had killed under the influence of dope. Sniffer was slipping a card up his sleeve while the others looked away. Barney Krantz, a gorilla-shaped man who preferred to use an ice-pick on his victims, was sucking on a stubby cigar, waiting for Mattore to speak. Gaunt, flap-eared Patsy O'Toole who had made the headlines by ray-gunning two cops, was leaning back in his chair, letting ash from his cigarette fall on the vest of his prison-made suit. And, like a rattlesnake in a nest of rats was Judd Nolan, called The Deacon. The craftiest killer of them all, Nolan had made crime pay in a unique fashion. He was a radium thief and used the dreaded substance in special radiations to kill those who interfered with his profession.

Mattore had been waiting for Steve Thatcher to speak, but the *Helio's* inventor and navigator just leaned back smiling at his criminal crew. Mattore didn't like this. His black-bristled jaw hardened. He trained his automatic on Steve's stomach as he spoke.

"Just as I told yuh," Mattore growled. "He ain't gonna lissen to reason."

Barney Krantz cleared his throat. "You said you could make him do it, Felix."

"Yeah!" the others chorused.

Mattore turned upon The Deacon, but the radium thief avoided his gaze. After several moments Steve Thatcher broke the silence.

"I made a deal with you men," he began. "Every one of you had a date with the chair. The governor and the prison board agreed to parole you under my guardianship to join me in the first voyage from Earth to Jupiter. There wasn't a scientist on Earth who believed this ship could penetrate the stratosphere."

Patsy O'Toole broke in: "So we took the choice between quick, painless death when that Fourth of July yacht of yours takes its nosedive and slow frying in the hot squat. But we wasn't gambling on this-here rocket ship being a success."

"You said it!" Sniffer Burns piped up in his squeeky voice. "This tub is highballin' for Hades now—or Jupiter maybe, like you say, Thatcher, but we dunno what's in it for us. Maybe you'll have us thrown in the jug on Jupiter. If they got such institutions there."

"Yeah—yeah!" Mattore said, waving the ray-gun at Steve. "We ain't takin' no chances. Now git up front and turn this crate back to Earth. Head it for South America."

Steve Thatcher shook his head. "We're heading for Jupiter whether you fellows like it or not. There's no turning back."

"Shall I go to work on him, boys?" Mattore spoke up quickly.

None of them answered, and Mattore again turned his gaze toward The Deacon. But as before the crafty radium thief payed no heed to him.

Steve broke the ice. "If you want to convince yourself that I'm not backing down, try a little torture on me, Felix. But don't kill me if you want this ship to land safely on Jupiter. None of you can operate the repulsion rockets needed in landing."

"He's right," The Deacon startled them all by speaking. "Let's get back to our posts, feeding the rocket tubes."

Steve Thatcher laughed to himself as he left the crew to return to his cabin forward. He had won the first battle, but the worst would come when he brought the *Helio* down on unexplored Jupiter.

Days were chalked off on the calendar above the navigation table. The *Helio's* speed held at close to nine thousand kilos per hour after the gravity pull of Mars was left behind. Now it was clear sailing through the asteroid belt and on to Jupiter.

On the eighty-fourth day Steve called the crew forward and when they were lined around him he held out his binoculars to Felix Mattore. "Take a look at Jupiter," he said.

The swarthy killer held the glasses to his eyes. "It's on fire!" he gasped.

The others glared at Steve. The Deacon spoke: "Smart guy, eh? Had it figured out. Now we're going to be burned alive."

"You don't have to believe Mattore's eyes," Steve told them. "The planet is red on the side we're looking at. The leaves and grass have changed with the season. You'll find out in about five minutes when we land. Go back to your posts."

Slowly the killer crew filed out, leaving Steve Thatcher with the grim problem of figuring a way to control the killers once they set foot on the strange ground. If Mattore had been able to smuggle one gun aboard, there probably were other guns among them. Then Steve hit upon an idea which would not only appeal to the killers' jealous minds but might solve his problem as well.

Picking up the interphone he rang The Deacon in the rocket chamber. When The Deacon answered, Steve told him: "You fellows better start drawing lots to see who'll be the first to set foot on Jupiter. Put in a straw for me."

The Deacon agreed, and a few minutes later called back: "Hello, sucker. I drew the long straw—for you. Sniffer goes first, then me, then Patsy and Felix. Maybe we'll lock you in!"

Steve was grinning when he clicked off the phone. Even The Deacon's threat didn't lower his spirits as he threw the lever for the repulsion rockets. The *Helio's* flight speed reduced suddenly then tapered off to a smooth glide which Steve aimed at a wide belt of crimson grassland.

The ship skidded along the ground for a hundred yards before it stopped. Steve twisted around in his seat, saw the men led by Sniffer piling out through the hatch. Mattore who was last to leave turned to leer at Steve. "We don't need your company, chum. We're locking this hatch and the emergency port from the outside. You can rot!"

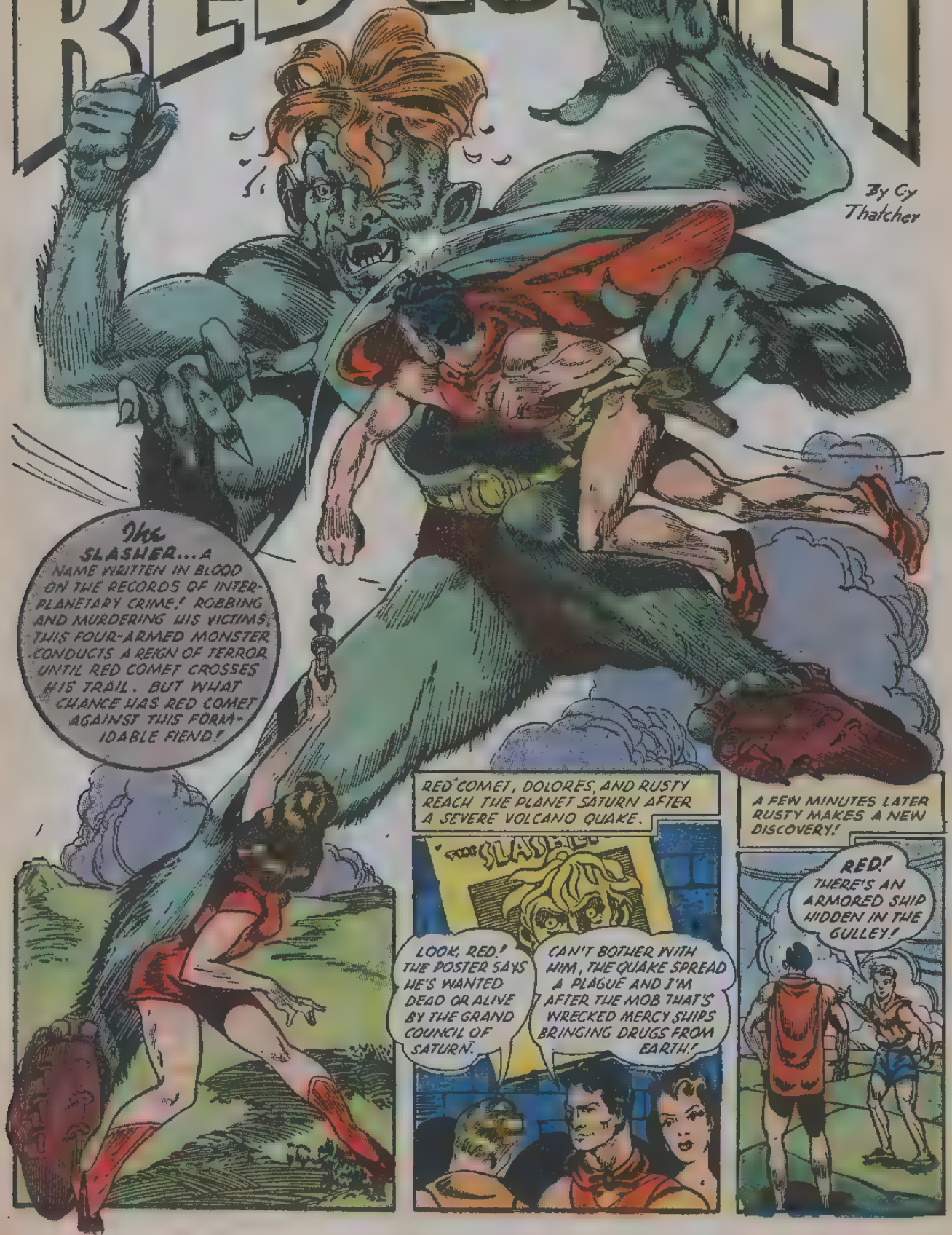
Steve could see them through the side of the astral visor as they walked down the plain. Then he pressed the electro-relay, and the *Helio* swished through the grass and rocketed over the startled killers.

"They forgot," Steve chuckled, "that everything that can go down, may go up. I've enough fuel and food to take me back to Earth. The robot pilot proved so successful I can feed the rocket tubes without any help. They won't see me again until I return with an expedition fleet."

The automatic aerial camera was humming as Steve glided across Jupiter, taking the evidence that would convince the Earth's scientists that the *Helio* had reached Jupiter — even though Steve could never say that he had set foot on the planet.

THE RED COMET

By Cy Thatcher

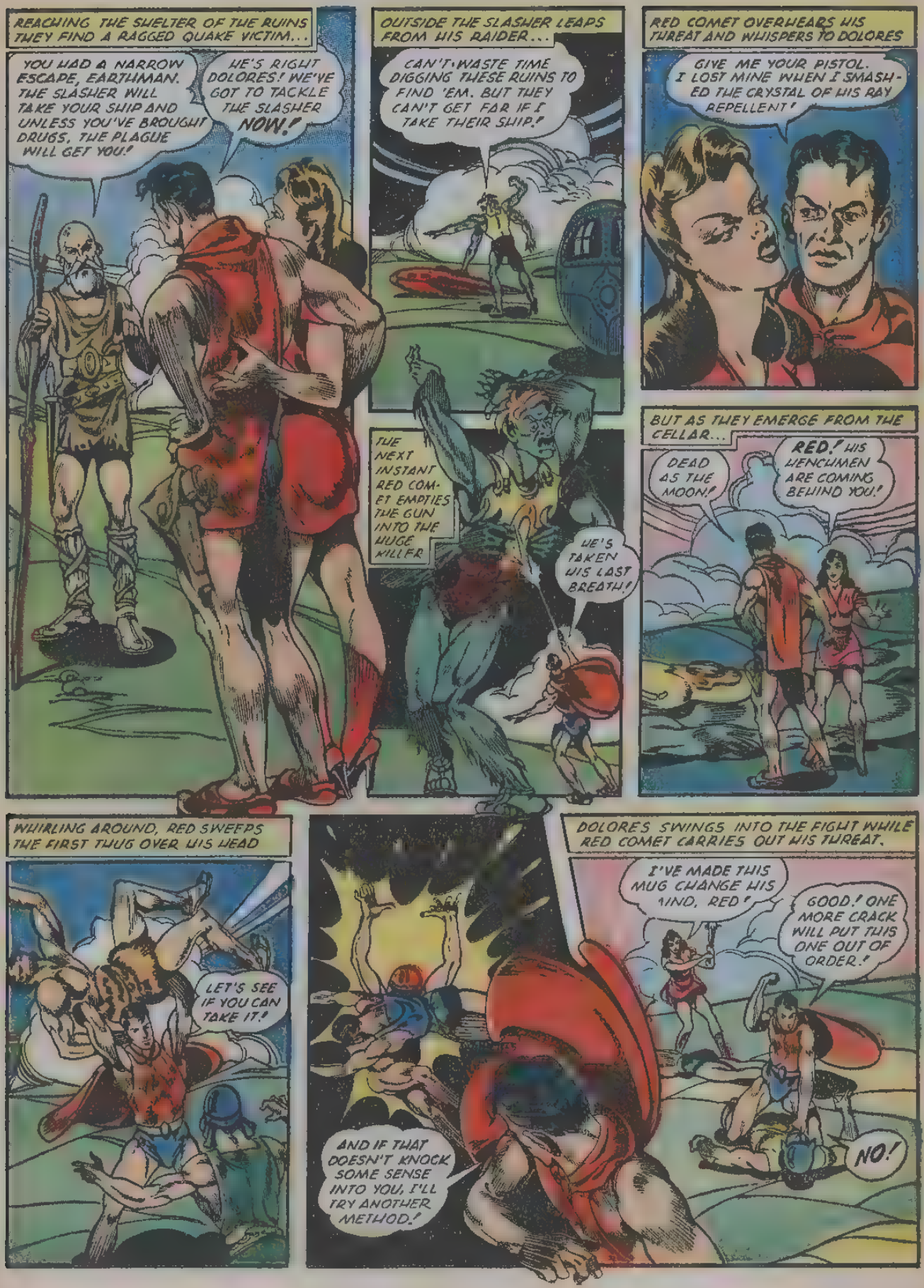

THE SLASHER... A NAME WRITTEN IN BLOOD ON THE RECORDS OF INTER-PLANETARY CRIME! ROBBING AND MURDERING HIS VICTIMS, THIS FOUR-ARMED MONSTER CONDUCTS A REIGN OF TERROR UNTIL RED COMET CROSSES HIS TRAIL. BUT WHAT CHANCE HAS RED COMET AGAINST THIS FORMIDABLE FIEND!
RED COMET, DOLORES, AND RUSTY REACH THE PLANET SATURN AFTER A SEVERE VOLCANO QUAKE.
THE SLASHER
LOOK, RED! THE POSTER SAYS HE'S WANTED DEAD OR ALIVE BY THE GRAND COUNCIL OF SATURN.
CAN'T BOTHER WITH HIM, THE QUAKE SPREAD A PLAGUE AND I'M AFTER THE MOB THAT'S WRECKED MERCY SHIPS BRINGING DRUGS FROM EARTH!
A FEW MINUTES LATER RUSTY MAKES A NEW DISCOVERY!
RED! THERE'S AN ARMORED SHIP HIDDEN IN THE GULLEY!

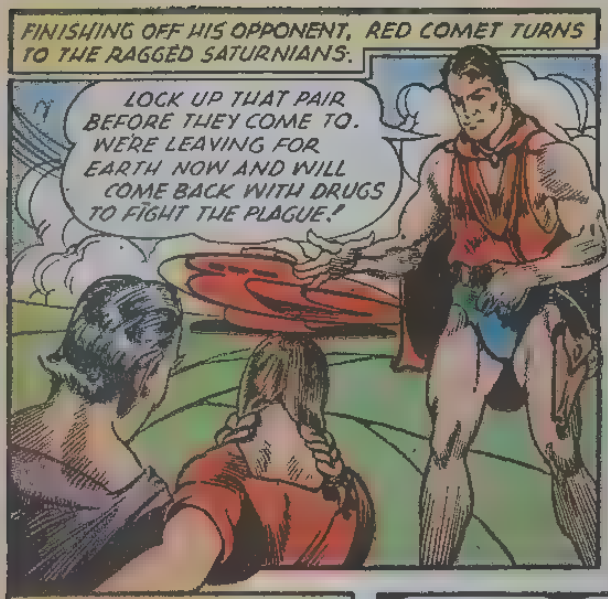
BUT A VOICE FROM BEHIND MAKES RED STOP.
YOU'RE FROM EARTH?
THAT'S RIGHT!
WE NEED DRUGS TO FIGHT THE PLAGUE SPREAD BY THE QUAKE. HOPE YOU BROUGHT SOME!
SORRY! I'M JUST AFTER THE MOB THAT'S BEEN HIJACKING DRUGS SENT BY EARTH!
MEANWHILE...
WHERE'S RED GOING WITH THAT SATURNIAN?
TO A QUAKE SHELTER. THE FELLOW SAID HE COULD GIVE RED A CLUE TO THE HIJACK MOB!
WHEN RED COMET REACHES THE SHELTER...
SOMETHING ODD ABOUT THIS GUY. I DON'T TRUST HIM!
STEP INSIDE A MOMENT. I'VE GOT SOMETHING TO SHOW YOU!
THE WILY EARTHMAN LUNGES TO ONE SIDE AS HE ENTERS.
I'M TOO FAST FOR YOU, EH? DROP THAT CLUB!
BEFORE THE SATURNIAN CAN RAISE HIS WEAPON AGAIN, RED COMET LASHES OUT...
YOU HEARD ME THE FIRST TIME!
HIS TERRIFIC BLOW KNOCKS THE SATURNIAN OUT THE DOOR WHERE RUSTY AWAITS.
THE SLASHER! HE'S COMING FROM THE SHIP IN THE GULLEY!
YEAH! WATCH FOR HIM WHILE I LOCK THIS THUG IN THE SHELTER!

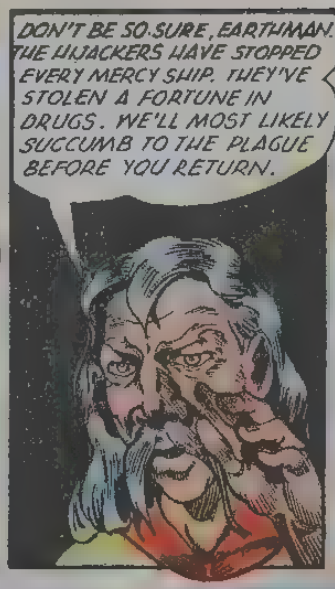
THESE QUAKE SHELTERS HAVE ONLY ONE DOOR...AND IT LOCKS FROM OUTSIDE
THROW HIM IN, RED, BEFORE THE SLASHER SPOTS OUR SHIP!
WHEN RED COMET HAS HURLED THE SATURNIAN INSIDE AND LOCKED THE DOOR, HE DRAWS HIS RAY PISTOL.
HANG ONTO THIS KEY, RUSTY. WHILE I GO AFTER THE SLASHER.
WATCH OUT FOR HIM, RED HE'S NO PUSH-OVER!
FEARLESSLY, RED COMET CHARGES THE HUGE KILLER..
SHOOT, YOU LITTLE FOOL! MY ANTI-RAY PLATE WILL STOP YOUR SHOTS. BUT NOTHING CAN SAVE YOU FROM MY TALONS
DOLORES IS SAFE INSIDE THE SHIP. I'LL GO TO TOWN ON THIS BRUTE!
GREAT MOONS! HE'S RIGHT! MY SHOTS FLASH RIGHT OFF HIS RAY REPELLENT PLATE!
WITH GREAT STRIDES THE SLASHER DESCENDS UPON HIS DARING FOE...
NO EARTHMAN LIVES WHO MET ME IN BATTLE!
THEN I'LL BE THE FIRST TO WIN THAT HONOR!
RED COMET HURLS HIS GUN AT THE ANTI-RAY PLATE.
YOU...YOU SMASHED THE CRYSTAL. I'LL BREAK EVERY BONE IN YOUR BODY!
NOW THAT RAY REPELLENT WON'T WORK!

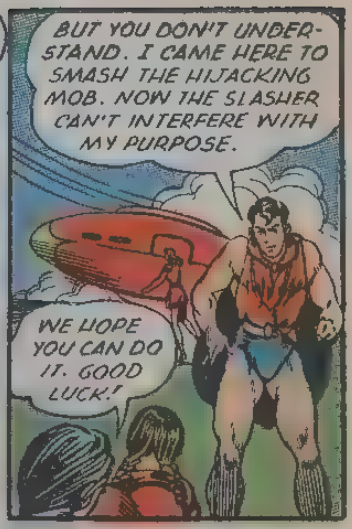
AS RED COMET IS CAUGHT BY THE TERRIBLE TALONS, RUSTY COMES TO HIS AID.
GET AWAY, YOU BRAT!
HOLD ON, RED! THIS WILL STOP HIM!
A HUGE HAND FLASHES OUT TO WARD OFF RUSTY'S MISSILE...
MISSED! I'D BETTER START RUNNING!
LEAVING RED COMET SENSELESS, THE SLASHER OVERTAKES RUSTY.
NOW I'LL TEACH YOU A LESSON!
OW! LET GO OF ME, YOU BIG BUM!
MEANWHILE, DOLORES RUSHES FROM THE SHIP.
HERE'S MY CHANCE TO SAVE RED. BUT THERE'S NO HOPE FOR RUSTY!
BUT THE SLASHER DROPS RUSTY WHEN HE SPOTS THE GIRL.
HA! TRYING TO GET AWAY WITH HIM. STOP OR YOU'LL WISH YOU'D NEVER BEEN BORN!
WITH A HEAD START, DOLORES BEATS HIM TO THE SHIP AND DRAGS RED THROUGH THE HATCH!
OPEN UP! I'LL CRUSH THIS CRAFT WITH MY BARE HANDS!
INSTANTLY, DOLORES FIRES THE TAKE-OFF ROCKETS, KNOCKING THE GIANT OFF HIS FEET AS THE CRAFT STREAKS SKYWARD.
YOU'LL PAY FOR THIS!
I'LL BANK AROUND AND LEVEL THE RAY CANNON ON HIM. THEN WE CAN PICK UP RUSTY!

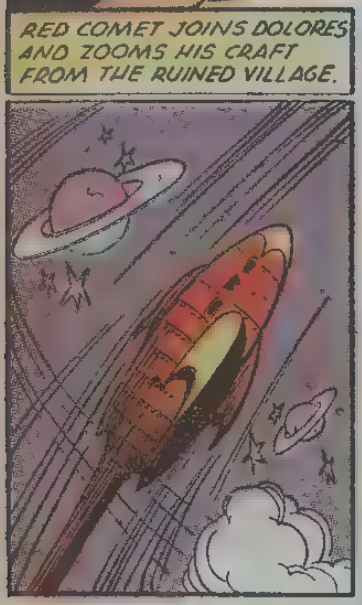
REALIZING HIS DANGER, THE SLASHER LEAPS UP QUICKLY.
THEY'LL NEVER GET A SHOT AT ME! I CAN BEAT 'EM TO MY OWN SHIP!
HE RACES INTO THE GULLY WHERE HIS ARMORED RAIDER IS HIDDEN.
WHAT WENT WRONG, CHIEF? THEY GET AWAY?
YEAH! TRICKED BY A WOMAN! HOP ABOARD! WE'VE GOT TO BLAST THEIR SHIP TO SPLINTERS BEFORE THEY CAN REACH A SPACE PATROL STATION!
IN A FEW MOMENTS THE SLASHER'S RAIDER IS ZOOMING STRAIGHT FOR RED COMET'S SHIP. BUT DOLORES STICKS TO THE CONTROLS, FIRING THE RAY CANNON.
AS THE TWO SHIPS DRAW CLOSER, RED COMET STAGGERS INTO THE CONTROL CABIN.
RED! ARE YOU HURT BADLY?
JUST SHAKEN UP HEY! LET ME AT THAT CANNON! THAT'S THE SLASHER COMING FOR US!
WHEN HIS SHOTS FAIL TO DAMAGE THE ARMORED RAIDER, RED COMET SWINGS HIS SHIP AROUND.
HE'S GAINING ON US, RED!
YES! AND WE HAVEN'T A CHANCE AGAINST HIS HEAVIER CANNON. I'M GOING TO LAND IN THE RUINS BELOW.
RED COMET SWOOPS DOWN ON A VILLAGE WRECKED BY THE RECENT EARTHQUAKE.
WHEW! HIS SHOTS ARE COMING CLOSER!
STAND BY THE HATCH, DOLORES. READY TO LAND!
LANDING, THEY RUSH FROM THEIR SHIP.
THIS WAY, RED! THERE'S A BREAK IN THAT CELLAR WALL!


REACHING THE SHELTER OF THE RUINS THEY FIND A RAGGED QUAKE VICTIM...
YOU HAD A NARROW ESCAPE, EARTHMAN. THE SLASHER WILL TAKE YOUR SHIP AND UNLESS YOU'VE BROUGHT DRUGS, THE PLAGUE WILL GET YOU!
HE'S RIGHT DOLORES! WE'VE GOT TO TACKLE THE SLASHER NOW!
OUTSIDE THE SLASHER LEAPS FROM HIS RAIDER...
CAN'T WASTE TIME DIGGING THESE RUINS TO FIND 'EM. BUT THEY CAN'T GET FAR IF I TAKE THEIR SHIP!
THE NEXT INSTANT RED COMET EMPTIES THE GUN INTO THE HUGE KILLER
HE'S TAKEN HIS LAST BREATH!
RED COMET OVERHEARS HIS THREAT AND WHISPERS TO DOLORES
GIVE ME YOUR PISTOL. I LOST MINE WHEN I SMASHED THE CRYSTAL OF HIS RAY REPELLENT!
BUT AS THEY EMERGE FROM THE CELLAR...
DEAD AS THE MOON!
RED! HIS HENCHMEN ARE COMING BEHIND YOU!
WHIRLING AROUND, RED SWEEPS THE FIRST THUG OVER HIS HEAD
LET'S SEE IF YOU CAN TAKE IT!
AND IF THAT DOESN'T KNOCK SOME SENSE INTO YOU, I'LL TRY ANOTHER METHOD!
DOLORES SWINGS INTO THE FIGHT WHILE RED COMET CARRIES OUT HIS THREAT.
I'VE MADE THIS MUG CHANGE HIS MIND, RED!
GOOD! ONE MORE CRACK WILL PUT THIS ONE OUT OF ORDER!
NO!

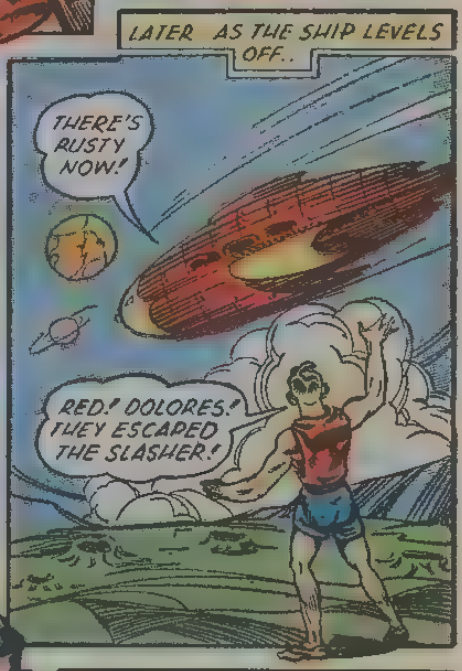

FINISHING OFF HIS OPPONENT, RED COMET TURNS TO THE RAGGED SATURNIANS:
LOCK UP THAT PAIR BEFORE THEY COME TO. WE'RE LEAVING FOR EARTH NOW AND WILL COME BACK WITH DRUGS TO FIGHT THE PLAGUE!

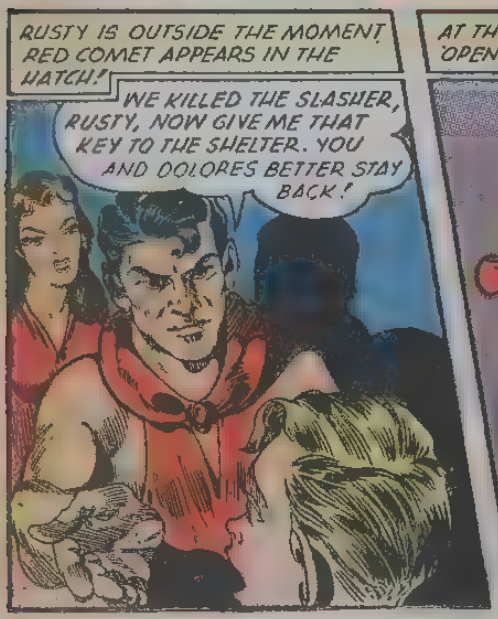

DON'T BE SO SURE, EARTHMAN. THE HIJACKERS HAVE STOPPED EVERY MERCY SHIP. THEY'VE STOLEN A FORTUNE IN DRUGS. WE'LL MOST LIKELY SUCCUMB TO THE PLAGUE BEFORE YOU RETURN.


BUT YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND. I CAME HERE TO SMASH THE HIJACKING MOB. NOW THE SLASHER CAN'T INTERFERE WITH MY PURPOSE.
WE HOPE YOU CAN DO IT. GOOD LUCK!


RED COMET JOINS DOLORES AND ZOOMS HIS CRAFT FROM THE RUINED VILLAGE.

WE MUST GO BACK AND FIND RUSTY!
RIGHT! I'M HEADING FOR THE QUAKE SHELTER I STILL CAN'T FIGURE OUT WHY THE SATURNIAN BACK THERE TRIED TO CLUB ME!


LATER AS THE SHIP LEVELS OFF..
THERE'S RUSTY NOW!
RED! DOLORES! THEY ESCAPED THE SLASHER!


RUSTY IS OUTSIDE THE MOMENT RED COMET APPEARS IN THE HATCH!
WE KILLED THE SLASHER, RUSTY, NOW GIVE ME THAT KEY TO THE SHELTER. YOU AND DOLORES BETTER STAY BACK!

AT THE QUAKE SHELTER, HE OPENS THE DOOR QUICKLY
COME OUT WITH YOUR HANDS UP!

HEARING NO SOUND FROM WITHIN, RED COMET ENTERS CAUTIOUSLY.
HE COULDN'T HAVE ESCAPED. RUSTY WOULD HAVE SEEN HIM!

SUDDENLY HIS PRISONER PLUNGES FROM A BEAM, BUT RED COMET BRACES HIMSELF FOR THE IMPACT.
THIS TIME I'LL KILL YOU, EARTHMAN!
YOU'LL WHAT?
WITH A LIGHTNING TWIST RED COMET THROWS HIS ASSAILANT!
SAY THAT AGAIN I DIDN'T HEAR YOU
DOLORES AND RUSTY DASH INSIDE
YOU KNOCKED HIM COLD, RED!
HE ASKED FOR IT NOW HE'S COMING TO
RED COMET TURNS TO JERK THE DAZED THUG TO HIS FEET
COME CLEAN! IS THIS THE HIJACKERS' HIDEOUT?
Y-YES! BUT I'M ONLY ON GUARD HERE WITH THE LOOT
THE SLASHER AND HIS TWO MEN ARE THE HIJACKERS. BUT YOU'D BETTER GET OUT OF HERE. THE SLASHER WILL KILL ALL OF YOU FOR INTERFERING WITH HIS RACKET!
THROWING HER LIGHT INTO THE REAR OF THE SHELTER, DOLORES GASPS IN IN SURPRISE!
WELL I'LL BE! THE DRUGS HIJACKED FROM MERCY SHIPS!
THE PLACE IS PACKED WITH CASES! SO THAT'S WHY HE PUT UP A FIGHT!
WHILE RED COMET LEADS HIS CAPTIVE TOWARD THE SHIP, DOLORES AND RUSTY ARE DRAGGING OUT CARTONS OF LIFE-SAVING DRUGS
WE CAN'T BE KILLED BY A DEAD MAN!
LATER AT SATURN'S CAPITAL, RED COMET TURNS OVER THE SLASHER'S THUG TO THE PLANET POLICE AND REVEALS STARTLING NEWS TO THE HEAD COUNCILMAN
YOU'LL FIND THE DRUGS AT THE QUAKE SHELTER ON THE WEST PLATEAU USE THE REWARD FOR THE SLASHER'S CAPTURE TO REBUILD THAT VILLAGE
I SHALL PROPOSE TO THE COUNCIL THAT IT BE RENAMED RED COMET-VILLE-IN YOUR HONOR!
RED COMET ROCKETS INTO NEW ADVENTURE IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF PLANET COMICS!

A SPECIAL MESSAGE TO THE BOYS and GIRLS OF AMERICA FROM HENRY MORGENTHAU, JR. "SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY!"

THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY
WASHINGTON

Boys and Girls of America:

Here's a way for every one of you to help your country.

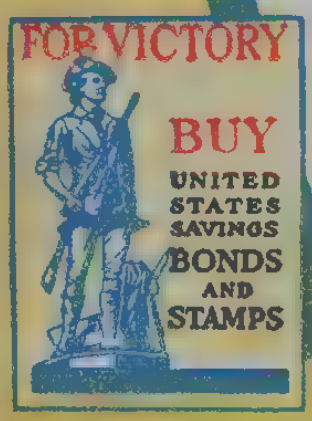
Every time you buy a Savings Stamp you are helping Uncle Sam to pay for a part of a gun, plane or ship which your fathers, brothers or uncles are using for the defense of our country.

If every one of you forty million boys and girls would buy at least one ten-cent Savings Stamp every week, you would be lending your Uncle Sam two hundred million dollars every year. Think of all the guns, planes and ships he could buy with that!

Remember, you can help to "Keep 'em Flying" by buying a Defense Stamp every week.

Sincerely,

Henry Morgenthau Jr.



THIS UNCLE IS WORKING IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST IN THE INTEREST OF NATIONAL DEFENSE and VICTORY!

NORGE BENSON

by OLAF BJORN

EVERYBODY WHO IS ANYBODY IS AT A BIG BANQUET IN PLUTO'S ROYAL IGLOOAN HOTEL ..NORGE, HATRACK, AND FROSTING HAVE DECIDED TO SEE THE UNIVERSE . AND THIS IS THE LAST DINNER

G-GUESS I OUGHTTA MAKE MY S-SPEECH NOW...

ER...GUESTS AND PENGUINS

LEGGO! IT'S MY FISH!

HEY! I CAUGHT THIS FISH. YA MIGHT LEMME EAT IT!

SUDDENLY THE LIGHTS GO OUT!

HEY! WHATSABIGIDEAR?

I CAN'T SEE WHAT I'M SWALLERIN'!

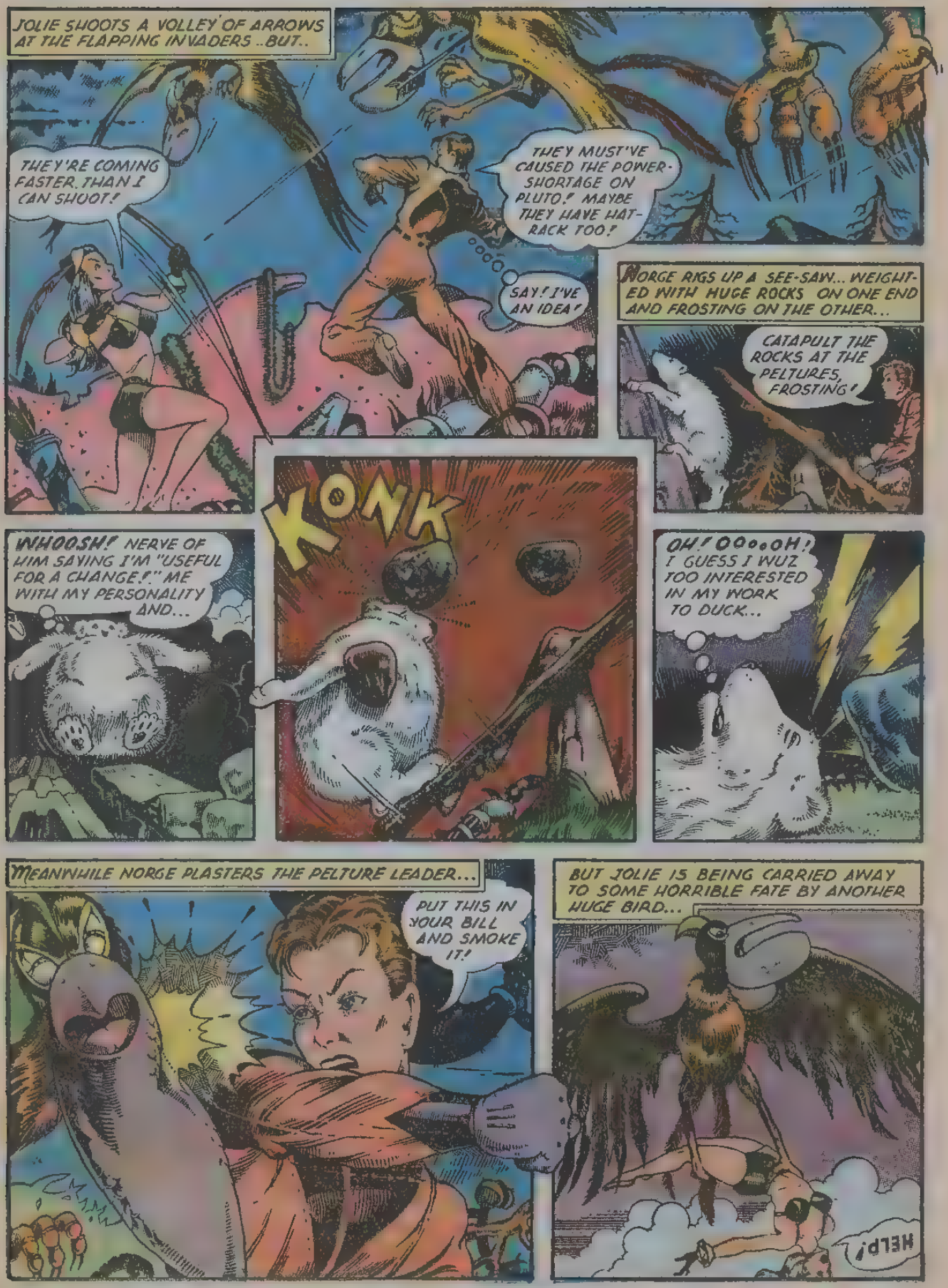
ANYBODY GOT A MATCH?

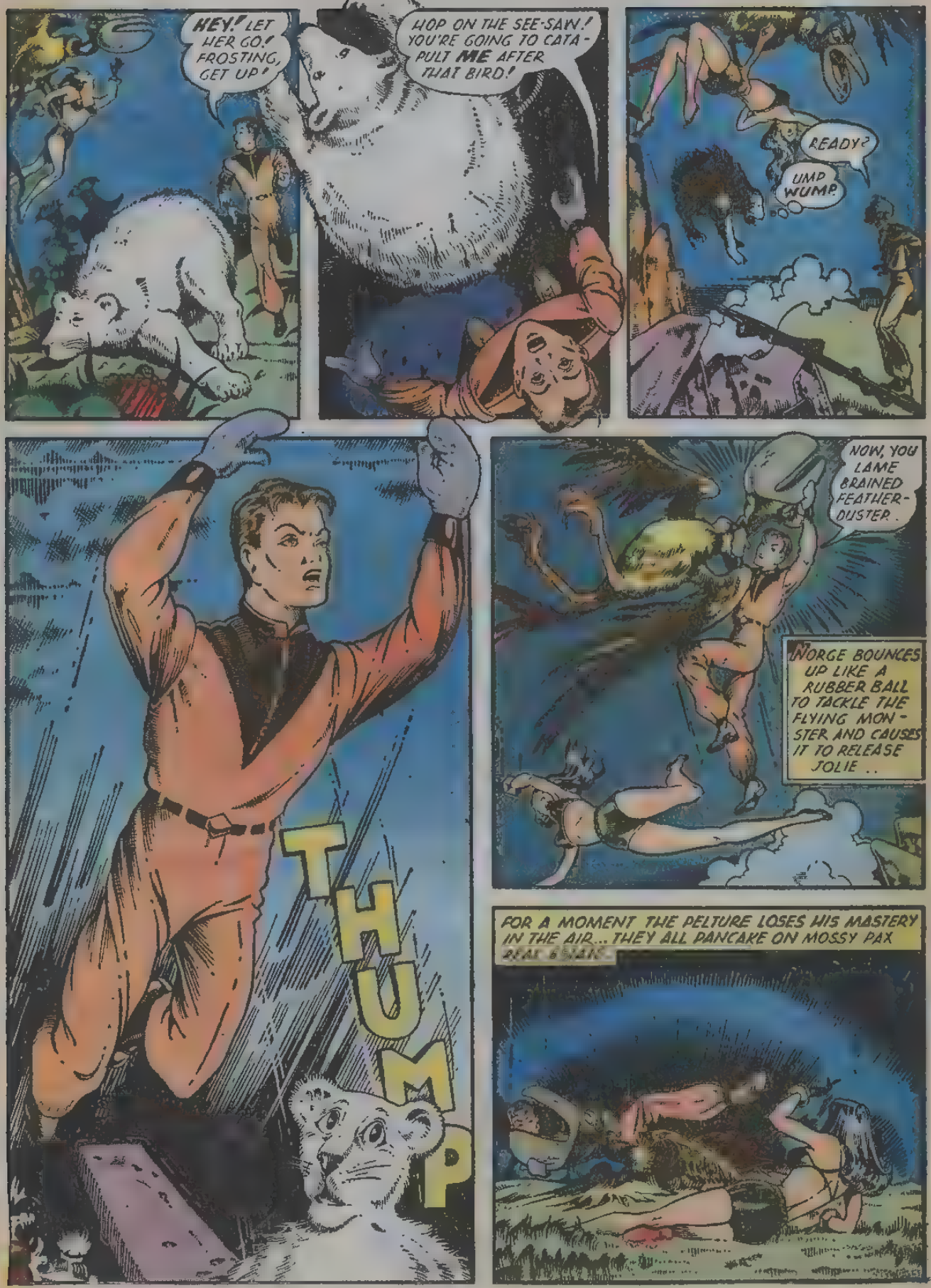
HATRACK, TROT OUT TO THE LOOKOUT TOWER ON VULCAN HIGHWAY AND SEE WHAT'S UP!

..AND WHILE YOU'RE AT IT, HAVE THE HOTEL MANAGER TURN ON THE EMERGENCY LIGHTS!

SOON THE LIGHTS GO ON AGAIN. BUT NORGE FORGOT WHAT HE WAS SAYING AND NOW HE'S WORRIED BECAUSE HATRACK HASN'T RETURNED. SO
A G..GIFT? FOR ME?
SNIFF..Y YES SO WHEN IT RAINS YOU'LL THINK OF US. MAYBE YOU'LL EVEN M...MISS US!
GEE, THANKS! AN UMBRELLA...BUT IT NEVER RAINS WHERE WE'RE GOING!
IT'S JUST A T TOKEN OF OUR L LOVE!
OUCH!
OH! SCUSE ME, EVERYBODY. I'VE GOTTA FIND HATRACK OR WE'LL MISS THE PEGASUS EXPRESS... IT LEAVES IN SEVEN MINUTES!
HEY, WAIT!
FASTER, FROSTING! WE'VE GOTTA GET TO THE VULCAN HIGHWAY, PICK UP HATTIE AND CATCH OUR TRAIN... ALL IN SIX MINUTES!
LISSEN. YOU'RE A STOCK HOLDER IN THAT COMPANY, LET THE TRAIN WAIT!
SUDDENLY NORGE SKIDS TO A STOP. AND FROSTING SKIDS TO NORGE.
? ? ?
SUDDENLY PLUTO PIVOTS ON ITS AXIS...AND NORGE AND FROSTING SAIL OUT INTO EMPTY SPACE!
LOOK AT TH' LOOKOUT TOWER! IT'S FALLING INTO SPACE... HATRACK! WHERE ARE YOU?! WHAT HAPPENED?
W WERE FALLING!
ULP! GULP!
YEAH. I THINK SO TOO!

WELL? DO SOMETHING!
W WHAT? OH THE UMBRELLA OPENED! IT'S A PARACHUTE!
THEY DRIFT DOWN TO A LUSH, TROPICAL VELDT ON A STRANGE PLANET. .
TRESPASSERS! I SHALL KILL THEM!
..AND LAND WITH A BANG!
OUCH!
UMP!
HMM NICE COUNTRY THIS! I'LL SEE IF I CAN DIG UP SOMEPIN' TO EAT!
BUT AS USUAL, THE ONLY THING FROSTING DIGS UP IS TROUBLE...
AWK! HELP! HELP!
KNAVE! COME BACK SO I CAN QUESTION YOU!
N.. NOW, L. LADY.. PULLEASE! WE'RE YOUR FRIENDS, HONEST!
YOU DO LOOK HARMLESS THIS IS THE PLANET OF PAX
I AM THE RULING PRINCESS, JOLIE...WE'RE SUFFERING HORRIBLE BLITZ RAIDS FROM THE PELTURES OF THE NEXT PLANET..OH, WHAT CAN WE DO?
LOOK! ARE THOSE PELTURES?
I AIN'T STAYIN' TO FIND OUT! S'LONG!


JOLIE SHOOTS A VOLLEY OF ARROWS AT THE FLAPPING INVADERS ..BUT..
THEY'RE COMING FASTER THAN I CAN SHOOT!
THEY MUST'VE CAUSED THE POWER-SHORTAGE ON PLUTO! MAYBE THEY HAVE HAT-RACK TOO!
SAY! I'VE AN IDEA!
NORGE RIGS UP A SEE-SAW... WEIGHTED WITH HUGE ROCKS ON ONE END AND FROSTING ON THE OTHER...
CATAPULT THE ROCKS AT THE PELTURES, FROSTING!
KONK
WHOOSH! NERVE OF HIM SAYING I'M "USEFUL FOR A CHANGE!" ME WITH MY PERSONALITY AND...
OH! OOoOH! I GUESS I WUZ TOO INTERESTED IN MY WORK TO DUCK...
MEANWHILE NORGE PLASTERS THE PELTURE LEADER...
PUT THIS IN YOUR BILL AND SMOKE IT!
SMAM
BUT JOLIE IS BEING CARRIED AWAY TO SOME HORRIBLE FATE BY ANOTHER HUGE BIRD...
HELP!


HEY! LET HER GO! FROSTING, GET UP!
HOP ON THE SEE-SAW! YOU'RE GOING TO CATA-PULT ME AFTER THAT BIRD!
READY?
UMP WUMP
THUMP
NOW, YOU LAME BRAINED FEATHER-DUSTER.
NORGE BOUNCES UP LIKE A RUBBER BALL TO TACKLE THE FLYING MON-STER AND CAUSES IT TO RELEASE JOLIE ..
FOR A MOMENT THE PELTURE LOSES HIS MASTERY IN THE AIR... THEY ALL PANCAKE ON MOSSY PAX

CAWING FURIOUSLY, THE PELTURE TURNS ON NORGE...
OH! THAT BRAVE BOY HE'LL BE PECKED TO DEATH!
NO! NOT IF I CAN HELP IT!! COME HERE, YOU!
MY PEOPLE HAVE COME TO DEFEAT THE OTHER PELTURES! THEY'RE FORCING A RETREAT!
WHILE JOLIE TUGS THE PELTURE'S TAIL FEATHERS, NORGE WRIGGLES TO HIS FEET, RAISES THE UMBRELLA AND...
SUDDENLY THE PELTURE PLOPS ON HIS PINFEATHERS, WITH NORGE'S UMBRELLA JAMMED, WIDE OPEN, IN HIS BILL!
AWK! ERK!
LET HIM ENJOY HIMSELF! WE MUST GET BACK TO MY PEOPLE!
WHERE'S FROSTING?
HMM GUESS HIS SKIN'S TOO HOT. HE'S COOLING OFF IN YOUR ICEBOX... BUT NOW I MUST FIND HATRACK!
PLEASE DON'T GO, NORGE STAY ON PAX AS MY MINISTER OF THE UNIVERSE I'LL SEND A POSSE TO FIND HATRACK!
DON'T WORK TOO HARD ON THAT, PRINCESS! I'M ENJOYING LIFE WITHOUT THAT CORKSCREWY. SCREWBALL!
BUT WHERE IS HATRACK? AND WHAT NEW MIXUP WILL NORGE MESS UP IN THE NEXT PLANET Comics?

THE STAR PIRATE
by LEONARDO VINCI
STAR PIRATE, KUBIN LORD OF OUTER SPACE, CHALLENGES THE WOLF SHANGHAI AND HIS DANGEROUS GANG IN A TO GAIN POSSESSION OF A SPACE-ROBBER'S TREASURE.
INSIDE THE WOLF'S SPACE-SHIP!
WE'LL BURY THE HIJACKED LOOT ON A FORSAKEN ROCK STAR ONE PERSON WILL KNOW THAT HIDING PLACE— THE WOLF!
WHAT ABOUT THE MEN THAT DIG THE GROUND?
THEY DIE!! AND IF NONE OF YOU SPACE-LICE CARE TO TAKE ON THE JOB, YOU'LL SHANGHAI A COUPLE OF MEN AT THIS NEXT STOP!
AS THE ROBBER CRAFT HURTLES THROUGH SPACE HE'S FOLLOWED BY A SMALLER SHIP THE VENGEANCE.

THE CONTROL ROOM OF THE VENGEANCE.
IT'S AN INSIDE TIP, TRODY. THE WOLF'S HIDING HIS SWAG THIS TRIP, AND ANYTHING HE BURIES, WE CAN UNBURY!
UNLESS HE BURIES US FIRST!
THAT'S A SWEET THOUGHT! HEY, LOOK AT THOSE SPARKS! THE WOLF'S BRAKING FOR A STOP!
NO HURRY TO FOLLOW THAT KILLER HE'LL BE DRINKING THE NEAREST TAVERN DRY!
AT THE NOTORIOUS SCARLET EAR TAVERN STAR PIRATE AND TRODY WATCH NARROWLY AS THE WOLF AND HIS CRONIES MUTTER OVER THEIR DRINKS.
WELL, THERE THEY ARE WHAT'D I TELL YOU?
UH-HUH. WONDER WHO THE KID CAN BE?
SUDDENLY.
THE GUARD! THE MARTIAN GUARDING THE TREASURE CHEST! HE'S...
MUST BE CABIN BOY FOR THE CREW!
MAYBE, BUT HE'S LOOKING FOR TROUBLE NOW! WATCH!
WITH A SNARL OF RAGE THE WOLF LEAPS FROM HIS TABLE.
BY JUPITER'S PIMPLED TOAD, I'LL TEACH YOU NOT TO BLAB MY SECRETS IN A PUBLIC TAVERN!
AND WITH A BELLOW OF RAGE SMASHES THE BOY AGAINST THE OPPOSITE WALL.
THE MARTIAN DIED, AND SO WILL YOU! HE KNEW TOO MUCH, AND TOLD IT. YOU.
BUT AS THE WOLF KICKS VICIOUSLY AT THE UNCONSCIOUS BOY...
THIS LOOKS LIKE OUR CUE, TRODY! HE'LL KILL THAT BOY!
YOU'LL NEED BRASS KNUCKLES TO FIGHT THAT SPECIMEN!

SAVAGELY STAR PIRATE SLAPS THE WOLF FULL IN THE MOUTH.
HOW DOES YOUR OWN MEDICINE TASTE, FANG-TOOTH?
EVEN AS THE WOLF REELS BACK FROM THE BLOW, ONE HAND JERKS A SWORD FROM HIS BELT
I'LL KILL YOU FOR THAT!
NOT WITH THAT SWORD! I HAVE A TRICK THAT WORKS LIKE ..
...THIS!
BUT THE WOLF'S CREW, WITH SWORDS DRAWN AND READY, SURGE ABOUT THE PIRATE.
STEP UP, BOYS, I'M A LITTLE SHORT-HANDED, BUT I'LL TAKE YOU ALL ON!
SUDDENLY A BOTTLE HITS THE OVERHEAD LIGHTS WITH A SHIVERING CRASH, AND..
STAR PIRATE IS JERKED ROUGHLY INTO THE OUT-SIDE DARKNESS!
WHAT TH...?

OH! IT'S YOU, TRODY. WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA?
THE BIG IDEA'S TO GET YOU OUT OF THAT DEATH TRAP AND STOP YOU FROM MAKING A BLASTED IDIOT OF YOURSELF!
THE TWO MEN HEAD FOR THE VENGEANCE.
YOU'VE MADE A DANGEROUS ENEMY, STAR PIRATE!
AND YOU'RE TALKING LIKE A GRANNY! CUT IT OUT...I'M A BIG BOY NOW
SUDDENLY A HAND HOLDING A BLACKJACK FLASHES FROM THE SHADOWS... A MOMENT LATER, TRODY IS DRAGGED INTO AN ALLEYWAY!
I CAN TAKE CARE OF MYSELF, RIGHT?
HEARING A STIFLED MOAN, STAR PIRATE WHIRLS AND
YOU AGAIN!
BUT THE PIRATE IS TOO LATE. HE SAGS AS A PARALTO RAY STRIKES HIM.
HERE'S OUR SHANGHAI CREW BOYS, LOAD THEM ON THE SHIP!
WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? WE'RE PULLING OUT FOR A ROCK PLANET AT ONCE!

LATER
OW! MY HEAD! WHERE ARE WE!
WE'RE WORKING FOR THE WOLF THEY FELL ME. THIS IS HIS SHIP. AND HOW IS GRANNY'S BIG BOY, NOW?
AW, LAY OFF! WE'LL THINK OF SOMETHING!
I'M THINKING OF SOMETHING NOW. TWO GRAVES ON A SUN-FORSAKEN ROCK PLANET!
THEN
GOSH, STAR PIRATE, YOU SAVED MY LIFE! THE WOLF HATES YOU SO MUCH HE'S FORGOTTEN ALL ABOUT ME!
THE CABIN BOY!
GRATITUDE IS O.K. BUT WHAT WE NEED IS A BUNCH OF SKELETON KEYS!
AND THAT'S WHAT I BROUGHT, SEE? THE MEN ARE ALL DRUNK IN THE MESS CABIN. YOU TWO CAN TAKE A LIFE CRAFT AND SHOVE OFF!
A FEW MINUTES LATER
THANKS, PAL! YOU'D BETTER COME ALONG WITH US. THE WOLF MAY START REMEMBERING YOU!
WE'LL HAVE TO PASS THE MESS CABIN, BUT THEY WON'T SEE US..
STEALTHILY, THE CABIN BOY LEADS STAR PIRATE AND TRODY PAST THE MESS HALL.
BUT STAR PIRATE STOPS AT WOLF'S CABIN.
I'M GOING TO HAVE ONE MORE STAB AT THE OLD BOY! YOU TWO GO ON ALONE.

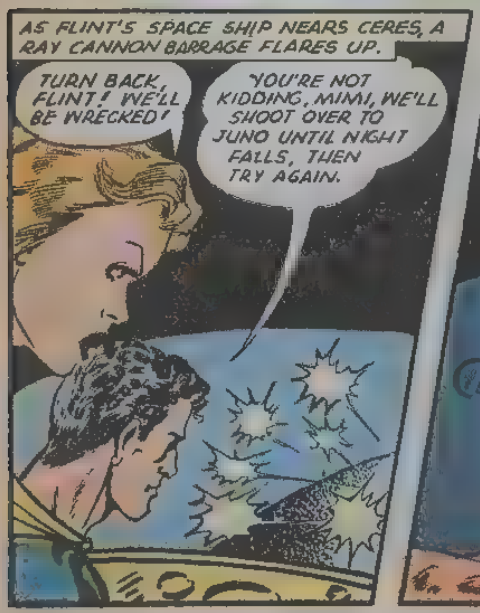
STAR PIRATE TURNS TO ENTER THE CABIN, BUT...
NOT ME, I'M STICKING TO SEE THAT YOU KEEP OUT OF MISCHIEF!
ME TOO!
AS THEY ENTER, THE ROOM IS LIT WITH THE BLINDING FLASH OF A PARALTO PISTOL.
AND A FEW SECONDS LATER THE WOLF IS GRINNING EVILLY DOWN AT PIRATE AND TRODY WHO LIE HELPLESS AT HIS FEET.
FOOLS! OUR PRISONERS ARE HERE, BUT HOW ABOUT THAT CABIN BOY?
HE ENGINEERED THEIR ESCAPE! GET HIM!
MUST HAVE DUCKED OUT OF THE DOOR.. WE'LL FIND HIM!
SEE THAT YOU DO!
AND BRING HIM TO ME! I'LL CURE HIM OF HIS SOFT HEART!
MEANWHILE BE CAREFUL DON'T BATTER THE PRISONERS TOO MUCH.. THEY'LL NEED THEIR STRENGTH FOR THE WORK PLANNED...
HEH HEH!

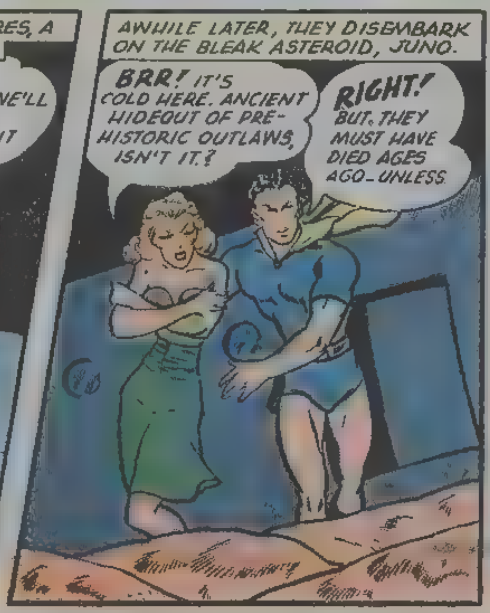
NEXT MORNING THE ROBBER SHIP LANDS ON THE BARREN VOLCANIC WASTES ON THE ROCK PLANET EXE
WHILE THE GREAT TREASURE CHEST IS UNLOADED, THE WOLF'S HENCHMEN GUARD STAR PIRATE AND TRODY CLOSELY.
THEY'LL SHOOT US DOWN LIKE VENUSIAN PACK RATS IF WE MAKE A DASH FOR IT NOW.
AND THEY'LL SHOOT US DOWN IF WE DON'T!
WE'D BETTER PLAY ALONG WITH THEM FOR A WHILE, TRODY. WE STILL HAVE TIME. THIS IS ONLY THE BEGINNING!
THE BEGINNING OF THE END, IF YOU ASK ME!
GET OUT, YOU LICE. I'LL GUARD THESE TWO ALONE. THEY'LL HAVE THEIR HANDS FULL FROM NOW ON!
DOESN'T WANT HIS MEN TO KNOW THE HIDING PLACE!
STAR PIRATE AND TRODY START. OVER THE DESOLATE WASTES OF EXE WITH THE HEAVY CHEST!
FINALLY THEY REACH A WEIRD CLEARING WHERE THE WOLF ORDERS THEM TO HALT...
SUDDENLY THE WOLF'S VOICE HOLDS A RASPING NOTE.
THIS IS THE END OF THE TRAIL..FOR YOU TWO!
NOW DIG A HOLE FOR THAT CHEST. SIX FEET DOWN!
I THOUGHT OF A GRAVE BUT I NEVER THOUGHT I'D HAVE TO DIG IT MYSELF!

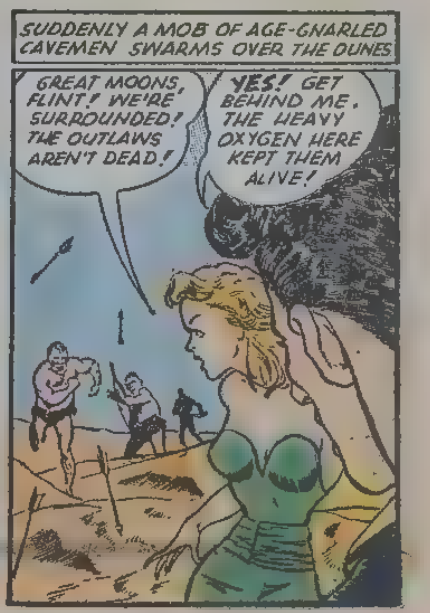
AND A MANICAL GLEAM SHINES IN THE KILLER'S EYES AS HIS PRISONERS HESITATE
WE'VE DONE JUST ABOUT ALL YOUR DIRTY WORK WE CAN TAKE, FANG-TOOTH!
YEAH! MIGHT AS WELL DIE CLEAN!
THEN DIE!
BUT SUDDENLY A SMALL FIGURE POPS UP FROM THE CHEST!
ST-STAY WH-WHERE YOU ARE! I'VE GOT YOU C-C-COVERED!
TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE WOLF'S MOMENTARY ASTONISHMENT, STAR PIRATE GIVES A HARD THRUST WITH HIS BOOT, AND HURLS HIS ENEMY BACK OVER THE CHEST!
QUICK WORK!
GOT HIM! HE'S OUT!
BUT AS THE WOLF FALLS, HIS PISTOLS SPIT FLAME AND.
HELP! MEN! HELP!
WE DISARMED HIM TOO LATE... HIS MEN WILL SWARM IN HERE LIKE VULTURES. BUT I HAVE AN IDEA. RUN FOR THE ENTRANCE TO THIS RAVINE!
CLOSE-PRESSED AGAINST THE ROCK WALLS OF THE RAVINE, STAR PIRATE AND HIS COMPANIONS WATCH AS THE WOLF'S MEN RACE PAST.
THEY'LL HAVE THEIR BACKS TURNED TO US NOW! S OUR CHANCE. LET'S GRAB IT!
WE'RE READY!
AND
IT'S STAR PIRATE!
COME ON LINE UP THESE PISTOLS WON'T WANT ANY ARGUMENTS!
WE'LL STARVE ON THIS PLAGUED PLANET. YOU HAVE THE GOLD LEAVE US SOME FOOD!
DON'T WORRY YOUR HEADS ABOUT THAT PROBLEM I'M SENDING THE SPACE POLICE PATROL OUT HERE TO YOUR RESCUE! ALL SET, TRODY? WELL, GOOD-BY NOW!
A FEW MINUTES LATER THE WOLF AND HIS PACK ARE BOUND TIGHTLY - STAR PIRATE, TRODY, AND THE CABIN BOY HAVE THE SPACE SHIP READY FOR THE TAKE-OFF.
TREACHERY LEADS STAR PIRATE INTO THE TRAP OF THE EEL-MEN IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF PLANET COMICS!

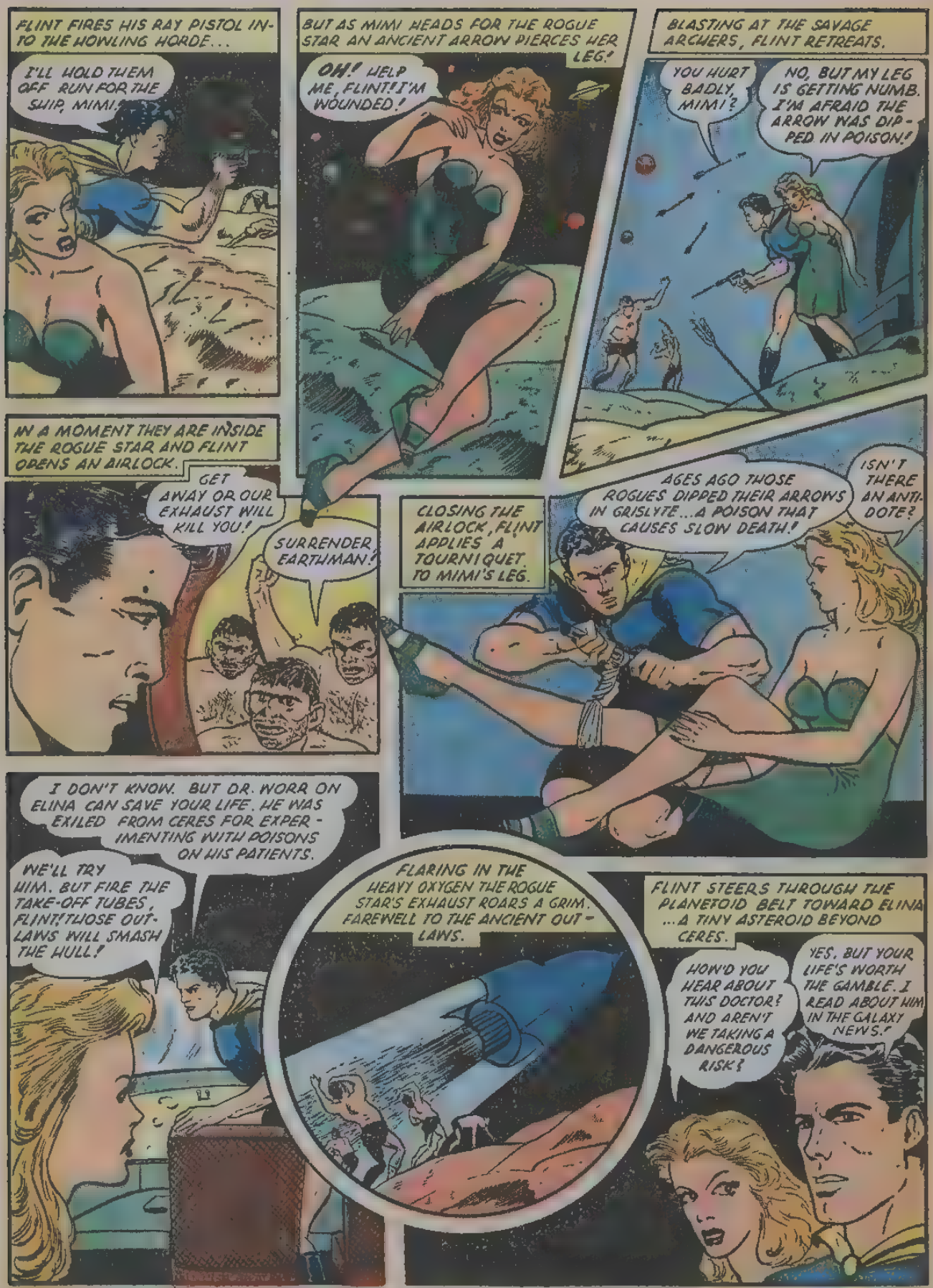
PLANET COMICS GOES ON SALE THE 10th

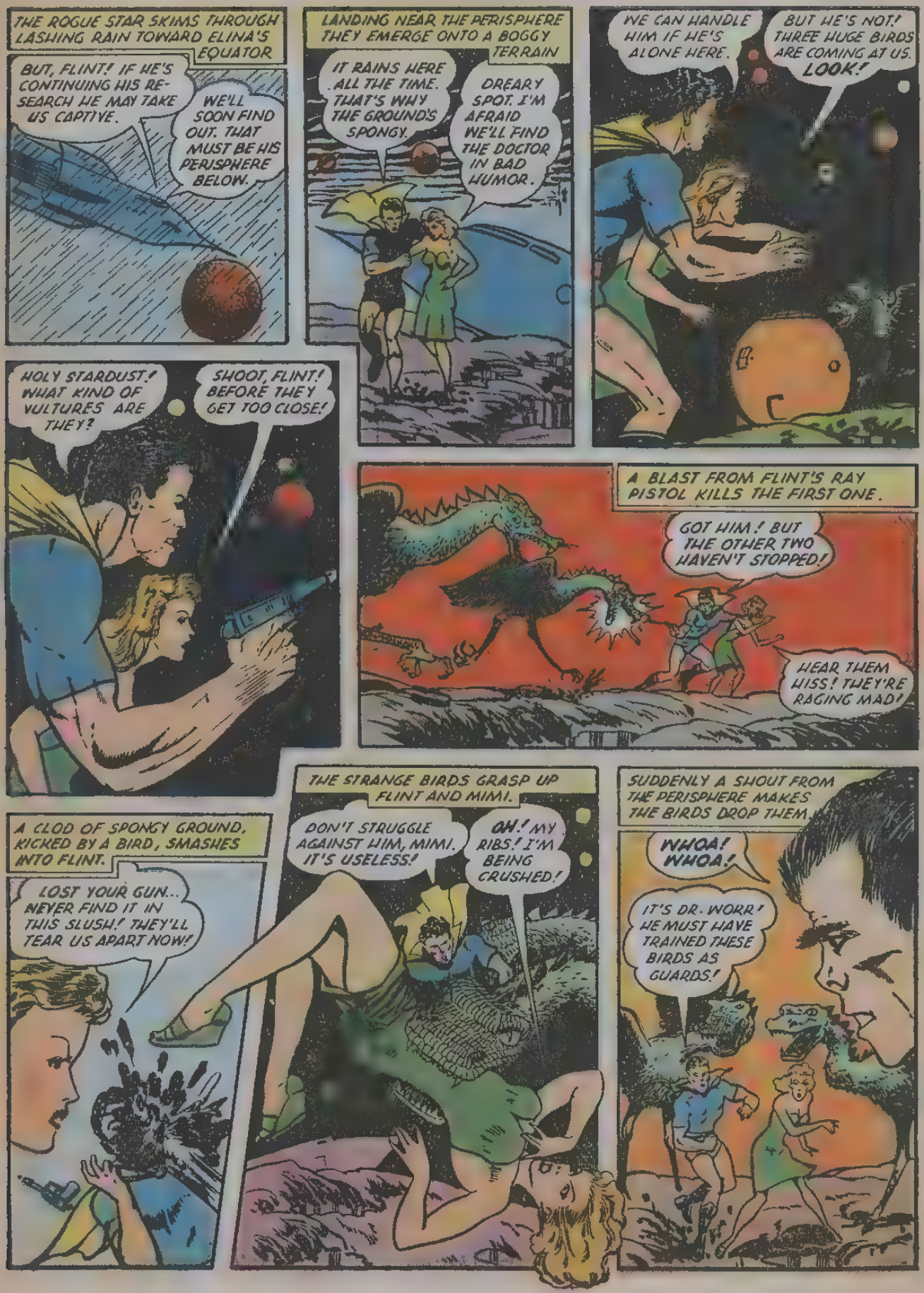
Flint Baker
BY AL SCHMIDT
AROUSED BY THE RUMORS THAT CERES IS ARMED FOR A RAID ON EARTH, THE DEFENSE COUNCIL ORDERS ITS ACE PLANET SCOUT, FLINT BAKER, TO INVESTIGATE, UNAWARE THAT THE MISSION IS SHEER SUICIDE!


AS FLINT'S SPACE SHIP NEARS CERES, A RAY CANNON BARRAGE FLARES UP.
TURN BACK, FLINT! WE'LL BE WRECKED!
YOU'RE NOT KIDDING, MIMI, WE'LL SHOOT OVER TO JUNO UNTIL NIGHT FALLS, THEN TRY AGAIN.


AWHILE LATER, THEY DISEMBARK ON THE BLEAK ASTEROID, JUNO.
BRR! IT'S COLD HERE. ANCIENT HIDEOUT OF PRE-HISTORIC OUTLAWS, ISN'T IT?
RIGHT! BUT THEY MUST HAVE DIED AGES AGO—UNLESS

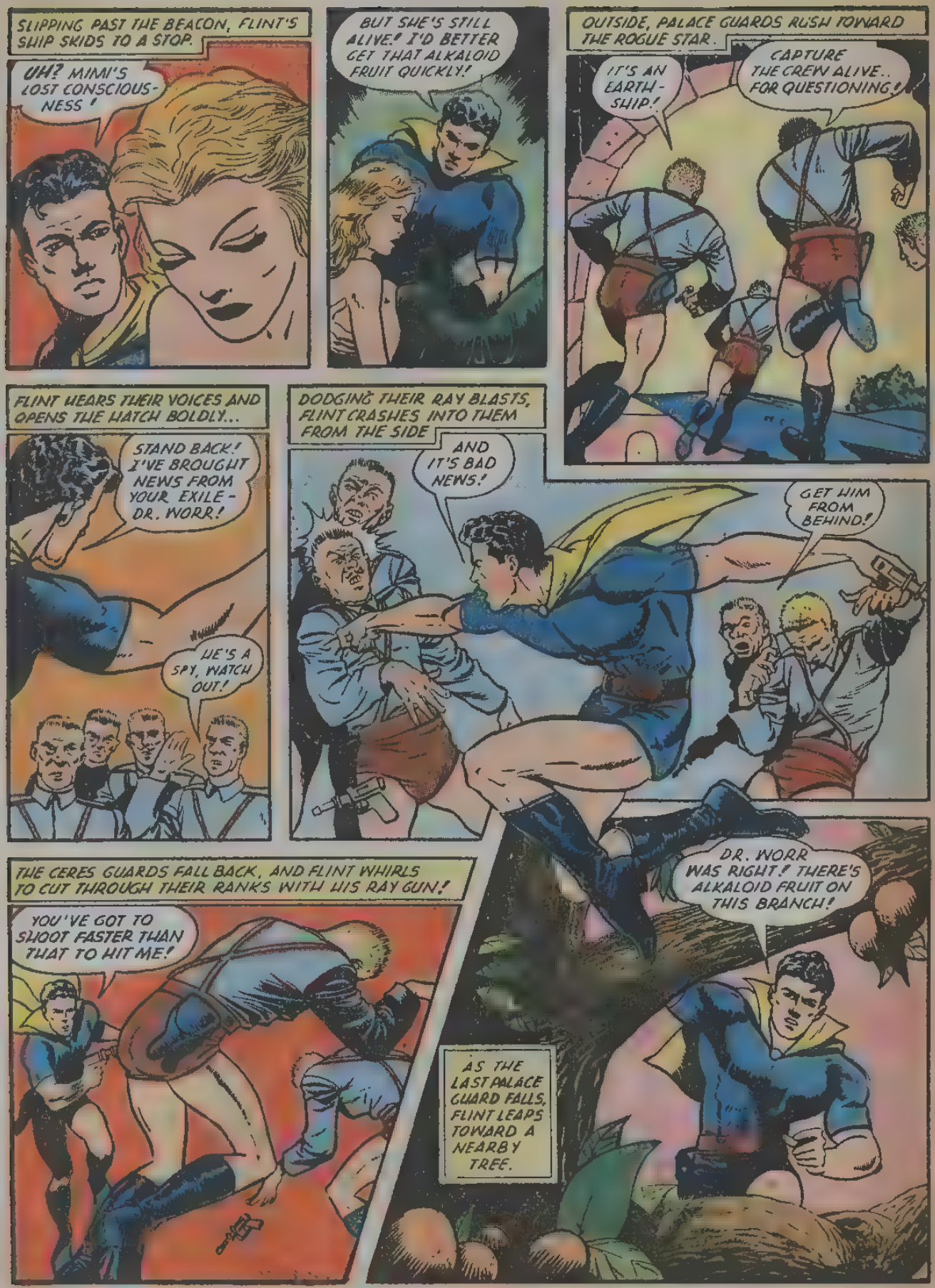

SUDDENLY A MOB OF AGE-GNARLED CAVEMEN SWARMS OVER THE DUNES
GREAT MOONS, FLINT! WE'RE SURROUNDED! THE OUTLAWS AREN'T DEAD!
YES! GET BEHIND ME. THE HEAVY OXYGEN HERE KEPT THEM ALIVE!


FLINT FIRES HIS RAY PISTOL INTO THE HOWLING HORDE...
I'LL HOLD THEM OFF RUN FOR THE SHIP, MIMI!
BUT AS MIMI HEADS FOR THE ROGUE STAR AN ANCIENT ARROW PIERCES HER LEG!
OH! HELP ME, FLINT! I'M WOUNDED!
BLASTING AT THE SAVAGE ARCHERS, FLINT RETREATS.
YOU HURT BADLY, MIMI?
NO, BUT MY LEG IS GETTING NUMB. I'M AFRAID THE ARROW WAS DIPPED IN POISON!
IN A MOMENT THEY ARE INSIDE THE ROGUE STAR AND FLINT OPENS AN AIRLOCK.
GET AWAY OR OUR EXHAUST WILL KILL YOU!
SURRENDER EARTHMAN!
CLOSING THE AIRLOCK, FLINT APPLIES A TOURNIQUET TO MIMI'S LEG.
AGES AGO THOSE ROGUES DIPPED THEIR ARROWS IN GRISLYTE...A POISON THAT CAUSES SLOW DEATH!
ISN'T THERE AN ANTIDOTE?
I DON'T KNOW. BUT DR. WORR ON ELINA CAN SAVE YOUR LIFE. HE WAS EXILED FROM CERES FOR EXPERIMENTING WITH POISONS ON HIS PATIENTS.
WE'LL TRY HIM. BUT FIRE THE TAKE-OFF TUBES, FLINT! THOSE OUTLAWS WILL SMASH THE HULL!
FLARING IN THE HEAVY OXYGEN THE ROGUE STAR'S EXHAUST ROARS A GRIM FAREWELL TO THE ANCIENT OUTLAWS.
FLINT STEERS THROUGH THE PLANETOID BELT TOWARD ELINA ...A TINY ASTEROID BEYOND CERES.
HOW'D YOU HEAR ABOUT THIS DOCTOR? AND AREN'T WE TAKING A DANGEROUS RISK?
YES, BUT YOUR LIFE'S WORTH THE GAMBLE. I READ ABOUT HIM IN THE GALAXY NEWS!

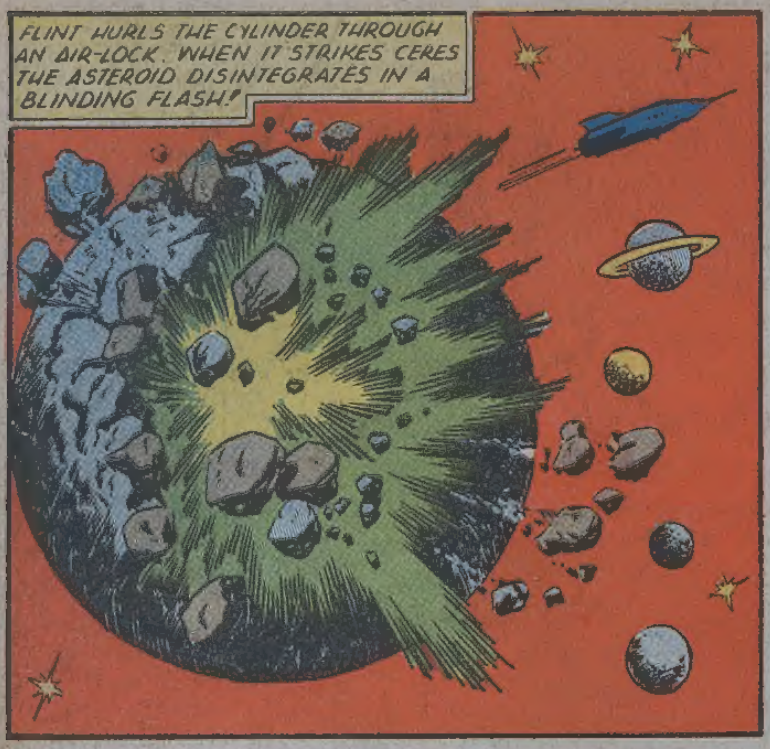

THE ROGUE STAR SKIMS THROUGH LASHING RAIN TOWARD ELINA'S EQUATOR
BUT, FLINT! IF HE'S CONTINUING HIS RESEARCH HE MAY TAKE US CAPTIVE.
WE'LL SOON FIND OUT. THAT MUST BE HIS PERISPHERE BELOW.
LANDING NEAR THE PERISPHERE THEY EMERGE ONTO A BOGGY TERRAIN
IT RAINS HERE ALL THE TIME. THAT'S WHY THE GROUND'S SPONGY.
DREARY SPOT. I'M AFRAID WE'LL FIND THE DOCTOR IN BAD HUMOR.
WE CAN HANDLE HIM IF HE'S ALONE HERE.
BUT HE'S NOT! THREE HUGE BIRDS ARE COMING AT US. LOOK!
HOLY STARDUST! WHAT KIND OF VULTURES ARE THEY?
SHOOT, FLINT! BEFORE THEY GET TOO CLOSE!
A BLAST FROM FLINT'S RAY PISTOL KILLS THE FIRST ONE.
GOT HIM! BUT THE OTHER TWO HAVEN'T STOPPED!
HEAR THEM HISS! THEY'RE RAGING MAD!
A CLOD OF SPONGY GROUND, KICKED BY A BIRD, SMASHES INTO FLINT.
LOST YOUR GUN... NEVER FIND IT IN THIS SLUSH! THEY'LL TEAR US APART NOW!
THE STRANGE BIRDS GRASP UP FLINT AND MIMI.
DON'T STRUGGLE AGAINST HIM, MIMI. IT'S USELESS!
OH! MY RIBS! I'M BEING CRUSHED!
SUDDENLY A SHOUT FROM THE PERISPHERE MAKES THE BIRDS DROP THEM.
WHOA! WHOA!
IT'S DR. WORR! HE MUST HAVE TRAINED THESE BIRDS AS GUARDS!

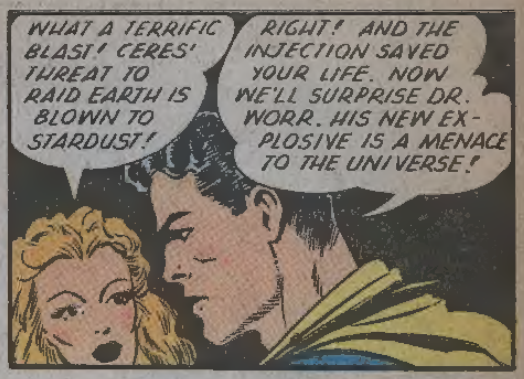
THE EXILED DOCTOR FROM CERES EYES THEM SUSPICIOUSLY
EARTH PEOPLE, EH? WHAT DO YOU WANT?
I'M FLINT BAKER. MIMI, MY CO-PILOT, WAS WOUNDED BY AN ARROW ON JUNO. I THOUGHT.
AH, YES, STEP INSIDE. BUT I'M AFRAID I CAN'T BE OF MUCH HELP.
BUT YOU HAVE A FINE LABORATORY HERE. IF YOU SAVE HER LIFE I'LL ARRANGE A PARDON FOR YOU!
BAH! WHAT CAN YOU DO? CERES PLANS TO RAID EARTH WITHIN A SPACE WEEK!
SO- YOU'RE AWARE OF THEIR SCHEME! EARTH WILL DEFEAT YOUR EXILERS IN THE FIRST BATTLE. BUT THAT'S ASIDE FROM THE POINT. THIS GIRL WILL DIE SOON UNLESS SHE IS GIVEN AN ANTIDOTE FOR GRISLYTE!
WORR IGNORES HIM AS AN ORION SLAVE ENTERS.
MIROPAN KIRT BOWSEN FON IKTUR!
STRANGE TONGUE. I CAN'T UNDERSTAND THEM!
IKTUR RAX OLON!
THE SLAVE LEAVES SUDDENLY, AND DR WORR DRAWS FLINT'S ATTENTION.
I'VE DEVELOPED AN EXPLOSIVE WITH TEN TIMES THE FORCE OF RAY ENERGY. FIVE GRAINS OF IT WOULD DESTROY AN ASTEROID.
BUT, DOC. I'M ONLY INTERESTED IN SAVING MIMI'S LIFE!
ALKALOID PLUMS ON CERES WILL NULLIFY THE POISON WHEN THEIR JUICES INJECTED INTO A VEIN. YOU WILL FIND THEM IN THE PALACE GARDEN WHERE A BEACON SHINES.
GOOD! IT'S NIGHT ON CERES BY NOW. WE'LL LEAVE AT ONCE!
MEANWHILE MIMI HAS BEEN WATCHING THEIR SHIP FROM A WINDOW.
FLINT! THAT SLAVE IS TRYING TO GET INTO THE ROGUE STAR!
IF I CAN STALL THEM A MOMENT LONGER, THEY WON'T DISCOVER MY SCHEME!

FLINT WHIRLS SUDDENLY ON THE RUTHLESS DOCTOR
I KNEW YOU'D TRY SOME TRICK!
STAGGERING BACK, WORR SNATCHES A RAY PISTOL FROM HIS WORK BENCH.
DROP IT, DOC-OR MY NEXT SOCK WILL BE A KNOCKOUT!
STOP, FLINT! HE'LL KILL YOU!
BUT THE ACE PLANET SCOUT DODGES WORR'S FIRE AND DRIVES A HARD FIST TO HIS JAW!
LEAVING THE MAD DOCTOR SENSELESS, FLINT HELPS MIMI OUT TO THE ROGUE STAR.
WORR HAD SOME FIENDISH PLOT UP HIS SLEEVE. BUT HE MAY HAVE TOLD THE TRUTH ABOUT THAT ALKALOID FRUIT!
I HOPE SO! THE POISON IS MAKING ME WEAK.
A MOMENT LATER FLINT SURPRISES THE ORION SLAVE
OUTSIDE, YOU LITTLE SNEAK!
HURRY, FLINT. THOSE HUGE BIRDS ARE RUNING TOWARD US!
DR WORR RUSHES OUT AS FLINT ROCKETS THE ROGUE STAR INTO SPACE
EARTH FOOL! IF MY SLAVE DID AS I TOLD HIM THEY'LL DIE WHEN THEY TAKE MY REVENGE TO CERES!
UNAWARE THAT THEY ARE TOOLS OF A GRISLY PLOT, FLINT TURNS HIS SHIP TOWARD CERES.
CHEER UP, MIMI! WE'LL GET THROUGH THE CERES DEFENSE LINES IN THIS DARKNESS!
I'M GROWING FAINT. AFRAID IT'S TOO LATE!
LATER WITH ROCKET TUBES SILENT. THEY GLIDE TOWARD THE PLANETOID
THERE'S THE BEACON! WE'RE COMING DOWN SLOW NOT MUCH GRAVITY HERE, SO I WON'T NEED TO FIRE THE REVERSE TUBES


SLIPPING PAST THE BEACON, FLINT'S SHIP SKIDS TO A STOP.
UH? MIMI'S LOST CONSCIOUSNESS!
BUT SHE'S STILL ALIVE! I'D BETTER GET THAT ALKALOID FRUIT QUICKLY!
OUTSIDE, PALACE GUARDS RUSH TOWARD THE ROGUE STAR.
IT'S AN EARTH-SHIP!
CAPTURE THE CREW ALIVE.. FOR QUESTIONING!
FLINT HEARS THEIR VOICES AND OPENS THE HATCH BOLDLY...
STAND BACK! I'VE BROUGHT NEWS FROM YOUR EXILE - DR. WORR!
HE'S A SPY, WATCH OUT!
DODGING THEIR RAY BLASTS, FLINT CRASHES INTO THEM FROM THE SIDE
AND IT'S BAD NEWS!
GET HIM FROM BEHIND!
THE CERES GUARDS FALL BACK, AND FLINT WHIRLS TO CUT THROUGH THEIR RANKS WITH HIS RAY GUN!
YOU'VE GOT TO SHOOT FASTER THAN THAT TO HIT ME!
DR. WORR WAS RIGHT! THERE'S ALKALOID FRUIT ON THIS BRANCH!
AS THE LAST PALACE GUARD FALLS, FLINT LEAPS TOWARD A NEARBY TREE.

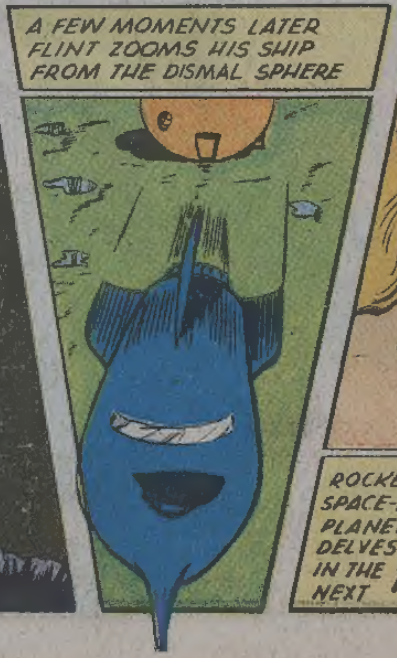
QUICKLY, FLINT STRIPS THE LIMB OF ITS ODD FRUIT.
IF THE JUICE OF THIS FRUIT FAILS TO SAVE MIMI'S LIFE, I'LL GO BACK AND SQUARE THE DOUBLE CROSS WITH DR. WORR!
AS HE RUSHES BACK TO THE ROGUE STAR AN ODD OBJECT ON THE REVERSE ROCKET TUBES CATCHES HIS EYE.
GREAT MOONS! WORR'S SLAVE O FIXED THAT. IT MUST CONTAIN HIS NEW EXPLOSIVE. IF I'D FIRED THESE TUBES, THE BLAST MIGHT HAVE DESTROYED US AND GIVEN WORR REVENGE!
REMOVING THE CYLINDER, FLINT LEAPS ABOARD HIS SHIP.
MIMI! I'VE GOT THE ALKALOID FRUIT! OH-SHE'S STILL OUT!
HE LOADS A HYPODERMIC FROM THE FIRST-AID KIT WITH THE FRUIT JUICE. .
AND INJECTS IT INTO A VEIN IN MIMI'S ARM...
HER LIPS ARE MOVING.' THIS STUFF WORKS FAST!
GUARDS CHARGE OUT TO SURROUND THE SHIP, BUT FLINT FIRES THE TAKE-OFF TUBES.
SIGNAL. THE BARRAGE POSTS.' WE CAN'T LET THAT EARTHMAN ESCAPE!
AND DEADLY RAYS CRISS-CROSS THE ROGUE STAR'S PATH!
INSIDE, MIMI STRUGGLES TO HER FEET.
OH, MY HEAD! A THOUSAND RAY CANNONS ARE BURSTING INSIDE IT!
OUTSIDE IT! BUT WHEN I TOSS OUT THIS GADGET WORR'S SLAVE PLANTED ON US, CERES WILL BE BLOWN TO BITS!




WHAT A TERRIFIC BLAST! CERES' THREAT TO RAID EARTH IS BLOWN TO STARDUST!
RIGHT! AND THE INJECTION SAVED YOUR LIFE. NOW WE'LL SURPRISE DR. WORR. HIS NEW EXPLOSIVE IS A MENACE TO THE UNIVERSE!

MIMI RUNS IN BEHIND FLINT.
HE WANTS TO COME HORIZONTALLY. THAT SUITS ME FINE!
I'LL OPEN THE SKY-LIGHT SO THE RAIN WILL RUIN HIS APPARATUS

BINDING WORR SECURELY, FLINT LOADS HIM INTO THE ROGUE STAR.
SAY! WE OVERLOOKED HIS SLAVE.. AND THE BIRD MONSTERS!
FORGET 'EM! THEY'LL BE HELPLESS WITHOUT THEIR MASTER!



BACK TO EARTH NOW. YOUR JOB IS DONE, FLINT. SORRY I WASN'T ANY HELP!
BUT YOU WERE. IF THAT ARROW HADN'T STRUCK YOU WE WOULDN'T HAVE GONE TO DR. WORR'S PLACE. AFTER ALL, THE DESTRUCTION OF CERES WAS HIS IDEA!
BUY WAR SAVINGS BONDS AND STAMPS

ROCKETING ACROSS DARK SPACE-WAYS, EARTH'S ACE PLANET SCOUT, FLINT BAKER, DELVES INTO NEW MYSTERIES IN THE NEXT **PLANET COMICS**

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RIP CARSON, PARATROOPER, LANDS OUT WITH HIS RADIO!
OHHH!
TRY TO ESCAPE, PAL!
LOOK, GANG, THAT'S THE MUNITIONS DUMP!
BET YOU THIS BUS I GET THERE FIRST!

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